

**Understanding Challenges and Strategy Use of Russian-Dominant Kazakhs Studying
in Kazakh-Medium Schools: A Qualitative Inquiry**

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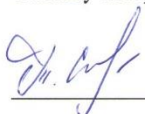
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Dear Sabina Tenbay,

This letter now confirms that your research project entitled: ___
**Understanding Challenges and Strategy Use of Russian Dominant Kazakhs
Studying in Kazakh-Medium Schools: A Qualitative Inquiry** ___ has been
approved by the Graduate School of Education Ethics Committee of
Nazarbayev University.

You may proceed with contacting your preferred research site and commencing
your participant recruitment strategy.

Yours sincerely

Dr Anas Hajar

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Acknowledgment

For every person in Kazakhstan who faced challenges on the way of trying to be accepted by a particular community. For those Kazakh people who find it difficult to speak Kazakh. For those, who don't speak Kazakh because of the fear of being ridiculed, or not taken seriously. For those children who grew up in Russian-speaking families but are putting great efforts into their studying in the Kazakh language – you are not alone; I dedicate this work to you.

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Abstract

Understanding Challenges and Strategy Use of Russian-Dominant Kazakhs Studying in Kazakh-Medium Schools: A Qualitative Inquiry

An increasing number of empirical studies have been conducted to capture the linguistic and academic difficulties that non-English speaking students often face while studying through the medium of English. However, there is still a dearth of research on students' experiences in studying through the medium of a language other than English. Little research also exists related to the language learning strategies (LLSs) deployed by young people to manage their own limitations and affordances as they endeavor to encounter their diverse challenges. Therefore, this qualitative study documents the challenges and LLSs used by a group of Russian-dominant Kazakhs studying in a Kazakh-medium school. Drawing on a sociocultural perspective on LLS research, this study sought to answer the following research questions: 1) What challenges did sampled participants face in studying in a Kazakh-medium school? 2) What contextual factors influenced the participants' Kazakh language learning experiences? 3) How did they deal with these challenges (i.e., their strategy uses)? It was guided by Darvin and Norton's (2015) model of investment in which the notions of identity, ideology, and capital are interlaced. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the data were collected online from eight Grade 8 students, using a written narrative and individual semi-structured online interviews. Clarke and Braun's (2013) systematic guidelines for conducting thematic analysis were adopted to analyze the data. The study reported on the participants' linguistic, content comprehension, and individual challenges of studying in Kazakh, particularly, their insufficient repertoire of Kazakh vocabulary which negatively influenced on most participants' Kazakh language proficiency. Also, almost all participants were not satisfied with the traditional practices of their teachers who did not permit the use of other languages than Kazakh during their

lessons, which made some of them reluctant to participate inside the classroom. This study also revealed that most participants used a few LLSs, which might be attributed to the lack of explicit LLS instruction introduced by their teachers. From this study, pedagogical implications such as the use of translanguaging, the near-peer role models strategy, and explicit LLS instruction, as well as directions for further research are suggested.

Аңдатпа

Қазақ-орта Мектептерде Оқитын Орыс Тілді Қазақтардың Мәселелерін және Стратегия Қолданылуын Түсіну: Сапалы Зерттеу

Ағылшын тілін үйрену кезінде, ағылшын тілін білмейтін студенттер жиі кездестіретін лингвистикалық және академиялық қиындықтарды анықтау үшін көптеген эмпирикалық зерттеулер жүргізілді. Алайда, студенттердің ағылшын тілінен басқа тіл арқылы білім алу тәжірибесі туралы зерттеулердің жетіспеушілігі әлі де бар. Сондай-ақ, жастар өздерінің әртүрлі қиындықтарын шешуге тырысқан кезде, өздерінің шектеулері мен мүмкіндіктерін басқару үшін қолданатын тіл үйрену стратегияларына (ТҮС) қатысты зерттеулер аз. Осылайша, бұл сапалы зерттеу қазақ орта мектебінде оқитын орыс тілі басым қазақтар тобының проблемаларын мен ТҮС-ын көрсетеді. ТҮС зерттеуіндегі әлеуметтік-мәдени көзқарасына сүйене отырып, осы зерттеу келесідей зерттеу сұрақтарына жауап беруге тырысты: 1) іріктемеге қатысушылар қазақ орта мектебінде оқу кезінде қандай проблемаларға тап болды? 2) қатысушылардың қазақ тілін үйрену тәжірибесіне қандай мәнмәтіндік факторлар әсер етті? 3) олар бұл мәселелерді қалай шешті (яғни, өз стратегияларын қолдана отырып)? Ол Дарвин мен Нортонның (2015) тұлға, идеология және капитал сияқты тұжырымдамаларды біріктіретін инвестиция моделін басшылыққа алды. КОВИД-19 пандемиясына байланысты, деректер 8-сыныптың сегіз оқушысынан жазбаша баяндау мен жеке жартылай құрылымдалған онлайн сұхбат арқылы жиналды. Деректерді талдау үшін Кларк пен Браунның (2013) тақырыптық талдаудың жүйелі нұсқаулары қолданылды. Зерттеу қатысушылардың қазақ тілінде оқудағы лингвистикалық, түсіншілік және жеке мәселелері, атап айтқанда, олардың қазақ лексикасының жеткіліксіз репертуары туралы хабарлады. Бұл қатысушылардың көпшілігінің қазақ тілін меңгеру деңгейіне теріс әсер етті.

Сонымен қатар, қатысушылардың барлығы дерлік өз мұғалімдерінің дәстүрлі тәжірибесіне қатысты ойларын білдірді; мұғалімдер оқушыларға сабақта қазақ тілінен басқа тілдерді қолдануға рұқсат бермеді, бұл кейбір оқушылардың сабаққа қатысуына теріс әсерін тигізді. Бұл зерттеу, сонымен қатар, қатысушылардың бірнеше ТҮС-ын ғана қолданғанын көрсетті, бұл, олардың мұғалімдері тарапынан нақты ТҮС нұсқауларының болмауына байланысты болуы мүмкін. Осы зерттеуге сүйене отырып, транстілдік, жақын құрдастардың рөлдік модельдеріне сүйенген стратегия, және ТҮС-ын нақты оқыту сияқты педагогикалық салдарлар ұсынылады. Сонымен қатар, одан әрі зерттеуге бағытталған мәселелер баяндалады.

Абстракт

Понимание Проблем и Использование Стратегий Русскоговорящими Казахами, Которые Обучаются в Казахских Средних Школах: Качественное Исследование

Все большее количество эмпирических исследований проводится с целью выявления языковых и академических трудностей, с которыми не говорящие по-английски студенты часто сталкиваются при обучении на английском языке. Тем не менее, по-прежнему отсутствуют исследования опыта студентов в обучении на каком-либо другом языке, кроме английского. Также существует не так много исследований, касающихся стратегий изучения языка (СИЯ), которые используются молодыми людьми для управления своими собственными ограничениями и возможностями при столкновении с разнообразными проблемами. Таким образом, это качественное исследование документирует проблемы и СИЯ, используемые группой русскоговорящих казахов, обучающихся в школе с казахским языком обучения. Основываясь на социокультурной перспективе исследования СИЯ, это исследование стремилось ответить на следующие вопросы: 1) С какими проблемами столкнулись выбранные участники при обучении в школе с казахским языком обучения? 2) Какие контекстные факторы повлияли на изучение казахского языка участниками? 3) Как они справлялись с этими проблемами (т.е. использование стратегий)? Это исследование руководствовалось моделью инвестиции Дарвина и Нортон (2015), в которой переплетаются понятия идентичности, идеологии и капитала. В связи с пандемией вызванной КОВИД-19, данные были собраны онлайн у восьми учеников 8-го класса при помощи письменного повествования и индивидуальных полу структурированных онлайн-интервью. Для анализа данных были использованы систематические рекомендации Кларк и Браун (2013) по проведению тематического анализа. В исследовании сообщалось о лингвистических проблемах, проблемах

понимания материала, и индивидуальных проблемах студентов при изучении казахского языка, в частности, о недостаточном уровне владения казахской лексикой, который негативно повлиял на уровень владения казахским языком большинства участников. Кроме того, почти все участники не были удовлетворены традиционной практикой своих учителей, которые не разрешали использовать другие языки, кроме казахского во время уроков, из-за чего некоторые из учеников не были активными на занятиях. Это исследование также показало, что большинство участников использовали только несколько СИЯ, что может быть связано с отсутствием четких инструкций по использованию СИЯ от учителей. На основании этого исследования предлагаются педагогические рекомендации, такие как использование трансязычия, стратегии ролевых моделей близкого сверстника и внедрение наглядных инструкций по использованию СИЯ. Направления для дальнейших исследований были представлены также.

Table of Contents

Author Agreement	i
Declaration	ii
Ethical Approval	iii
CITI Training Certificate	iv
Acknowledgment	v
Abstract	vi
List of Tables	xv
List of Figures	xvi
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Personal Experience	2
Background Information.....	4
Problem Statement	5
Purpose of the Study and Research Questions.....	6
Significance of the Study.....	7
Outline of the Study	8
Chapter 2: Literature Review	10
Introduction.....	10
Differences between First and Second Language Acquisition	10
Childhood Bilingualism.....	12
Challenges of Studying in the Second Language.....	13
Linguistic Challenges.....	13
Challenges of Content Comprehension.....	17
Other Challenges	18
Understanding Language Learning Strategies	18

Development of the Construct of LLSs: Characteristics of a “Good Language Learner”	19
Definition and Classification of LLSs	22
Major Criticisms of LLS Research	25
Towards a Sociocultural Perspective on LLSs	27
Conceptual Framework	29
Conclusion	31
Chapter 3. Methodology	33
Introduction	33
Research Design	33
Research Site and Sample	35
Data Collection Instruments	37
Data Collection Procedures	40
Data Analysis	41
Ethical Considerations	43
Conclusion	45
Chapter 4: Findings	46
Introduction	46
Biographical Vignettes of the Research Participants	47
Contextual Factors Affecting the Participants’ Kazakh Language Learning Experiences	50
The Influence of Mediating Social Agents	51
Challenges of Studying in Kazakh	58
Linguistic Challenges	58
Content Comprehension Challenges	60

Individual Challenges	61
Dealing with the Challenges: Participants' Kazakh Learning Strategy Use	62
Direct Strategies	63
Indirect Strategies	67
Conclusion	68
Chapter 5: Discussion	70
Revisiting the Conceptual Framework Adopted in this Study.....	70
RQ1: What Challenges did Sampled Participants Face in Studying in a Kazakh-Medium School?	71
RQ2: What Contextual Factors Influenced the Participants' Kazakh Language Learning Experiences?	75
RQ3: How Did they Deal with these Challenges (i.e., Their Strategy Uses)?	80
Conclusion	84
Chapter 6: Conclusion.....	85
Major Conclusions of the Study.....	85
Strengths and Limitations of the Study	88
Implications of This Research Study.....	90
References	95
Appendix A	110
Appendix B.....	112
Appendix C.....	114
Appendix D	126

List of Tables

Table 1	36
Table 2	63

List of Figures

Figure 1	29
Figure 2	43

Chapter 1: Introduction

With the active promotion of the revitalization and re-acquisition of the Kazakh language after independence in 1991, Kazakhstan has become known as a country with citizens who have a strong national identity and sense of patriotism, and who consider the Kazakh language as a symbol of the national culture and sovereignty (Smagulova, 2021). For over 60 years (between 1930s and 1990s) the Kazakh community experienced a language shift from Kazakh to Russian because of the integration of Kazakhstan into the Soviet Union in 1936. As a result, the Russian language was promoted as the language of power, and as a vehicle towards the development of the Soviet identity (Karabassova, 2021; Smagulova, 2016). Since 1991, the language hierarchy of Kazakhstan has witnessed a remarkable change, in which Kazakh became the state language, Russian the official language and the language of “ethnic minorities, communicative legacy and, in some contexts, soft power” (Goodman and Karabassova 2018, p. 148), and English the language of international relations and business (Law on Languages of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 1997). The linguistic profile, culture, and background of the citizens of Kazakhstan have been irrevocably influenced by significant historical events such as the colonization of Kazakh lands by the Russian Empire and their incorporation into the Soviet Union. This influence resulted in the establishment of the unique context, in which almost all Kazakh people have been able to communicate in at least two languages – Kazakh and Russian (Reagan, 2019; Pavlenko, 2011), and this context is still sparsely researched and investigated in relation to many spheres, especially education.

With the above in mind, the present study has adopted a qualitative case study research design to delineate the challenges and language strategy use of a group of eighth grade Russian-dominant Kazakh students studying in a Kazakh-medium school. To the best of my knowledge, it is the first empirical study in the context of Kazakhstan that aims

to uncover the perceptions of Russian-dominant Kazakh students towards their strategic learning efforts of learning Kazakh. The present chapter provides background information about the linguistic profile of Kazakhstan and the researcher's personal perspective towards the phenomenon under study. It also depicts the research problem and purpose, research questions, and the significance of the study.

Personal Experience

Despite I grew up in a Russian-speaking family in Kokshetau city located in North Kazakhstan, and Russian was the first language I started to speak, I did not perceive it as my mother-tongue. This is because according to the mentality of the Kazakh society, language is an innate ability that can be transmitted to a child through their mother's milk. Thus, the majority of Kazakhs argues that nation and language are interdependent concepts; therefore, the Kazakh language is unconditionally recognized as the mother-tongue to almost all Kazakh citizens regardless of their linguistic and social backgrounds. Moreover, almost from birth, most Kazakh families, especially grandparents, educate their children and want them to have strong ideological and moral values by inculcating a love for Kazakh traditions, culture, and lifestyle in them (Tleubayeva et al, 2017). However, a number of researchers (e.g., Fierman, 2006; Smagulova, 2008; Pavlenko, 2011; Bahry et al., 2017) suggest that there are some families in Kazakhstan, who are facing a difficulty in using Kazakh, mainly due to the massive language shift which is the outcome of the implementation of the Soviet policies. Nevertheless, most Kazakh parents aspire to have their children speak the Kazakh language.

Likewise, my parents considered that it was their moral duty to help me acquire the Kazakh language. Therefore, they sent me to schools where household Kazakh is the medium of instruction. Thus, I went to a Kazakh-medium school at the age of 7 and studied there for 11 years. Over this time, I was thinking about how easy it would be to

study in the Russian language because it was immensely difficult for me to answer to teachers' questions, express my opinion and ideas, or complete assignments in Kazakh due to my insufficient knowledge of the Kazakh language. It was also sometimes challenging to me to comprehend the subject content in Kazakh. This is because being raised in a Russian speaking family, which had insufficient knowledge of Kazakh, I tended to employ Russian as a daily means of communication with my family members and friends. Consequently, my use of Kazakh was largely confined to formal settings, including a classroom.

Despite the diverse challenges I faced in learning and studying through the medium of Kazakh, I was not without language learning strategies (LLSs). To clarify this point further, from the first to the fifth grade, when I had almost no knowledge of the Kazakh language, I used to ask my grandparents to encode the meanings of Kazakh proverbs and sayings, so that I could explain them in my own words to a teacher. Further, when I developed my communicative and academic skills in the Kazakh language in the eighth grade, it became easier for me to study through Kazakh as a medium of instruction (KMI); however, it was still complicated to analyze and reflect on literary, scientific, and historic materials. As a result, I tended to memorize almost every sentence of the texts to be prepared to retell the material to my teachers. As a result, I expanded my vocabulary and overcame my fear of speaking in front of a class. In spite of the difficulties, I faced during my education, I am proud to be a graduate of the Kazakh-medium school, because otherwise, I would not have had an opportunity to learn the Kazakh language as decently as I know it now.

The above description of my personal experience of learning Kazakh played a pivotal role in motivating me to conduct the present research study to disentangle the diverse linguistic and academic challenges that Russian-dominant Kazakh students may

encounter while studying through KMI schools, together with the Kazakh learning strategies that can be deployed to overcome these challenges. Hence, I am intrinsically motivated to explore this issue.

Background Information

The long-lasting influence of the Russian language and culture on Kazakhstan began with the colonization of the Kazakh khanate by the Russian Empire in the 19th century (Bahry et al., 2017). Even after the Russian Revolution of 1917, which resulted in the reformulation of the Russian Empire into the Soviet Union, Kazakhstan was integrated into the Soviet Union as the Kirghiz Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic in 1920, and then as the Kazakh Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic (Kazakh ASSR) in 1925 (Reagan, 2019). Reagan (2019) stated that in both the tsarist and Soviet eras, Kazakhstan was perceived as the most linguistically Russified country in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) after Russia, due to the significant place that the Russian language took in the spheres of education, economics, politics, and healthcare in Kazakhstan. Moreover, the Communist Party promoted the Russian language on par with the Communist ideologies that contributed to the formation of the Soviet Socialist identity. This promotion affected various domains in all Soviet Socialist Republics, including Kazakh ASSR and education has been no exception to this (Fierman, 2006). For example, due to the reform of "Russification" present in the 1930s, teaching in Russian in all schools became mandatory, and as a result, 700 Kazakh-medium schools were closed, until eventually, studying in Kazakh became almost impossible (Fierman, 1998; Reagan, 2019). Moreover, a number of researchers (e.g., Pavlenko, 2009, 2011; Smagulova, 2021) point out that the Russian language gained significant power and prestige all over the Soviet Union under the governance of the Communist party. Therefore, speaking Russian became vital in all 15 republics of the Soviet Union, since indigenous people wanted employers' doors to be

open to them, and they sought acceptance within the Russian community, which was perceived as being the most powerful one. By contrast, since the 1930s, the prestige of the Kazakh language has decreased; consequently, people wanted their children to study in Russian. Thus, by the end of the 1980s, there was a dramatic increase in the monolingual Russian-dominant Kazakh community (Fierman, 1998; Pavlenko, 2011; Smagulova, 2008; Bahry et al., 2017).

Since independence in 1991, the government of Kazakhstan has been foregrounding the revitalization, re-acquisition, and popularization of the Kazakh language. Even though the Kazakh language has gained the status of being the state language, the Russian language is also official and “remains as the lingua-franca, the language of pop-culture, mass-media, new media, education, as well as the language of academic and business communication” (Ahn & Smagulova, 2016, p. 4).

This section presented background information which is important to consider when discussing the language issues of the Kazakhstani context. It further leads to the elaboration of a problem statement regarding education in the Kazakh language.

Problem Statement

Although traces of the language shift from Kazakh to Russian have been influencing language ideologies the essence of which was a belief about the dominance of the Russian language over Kazakh, since independence, the attitude of the society towards the Kazakh language has been changing. Therefore, many Russian-dominant Kazakh parents, who were raised in the USSR have become eager to strengthen this loose connection with the language of their ancestors by educating their children in Kazakh-medium schools. For example, Amantay et al. (2017) pointed out that although many Kazakh parents do not speak the Kazakh language very well, they perceive it as “the language of blood and ancestors” (p. 16). Other Kazakh parents, as Amantay et al. (2017)

described, hold the view that because they are barely able to provide their children with the conditions necessary for learning the Kazakh language at home, they send their children to schools with KMI. It is worth mentioning that nowadays, as Smagulova (2008, 2021) stated, Kazakh families have an opportunity to educate their children in Kazakh as many Kazakh-medium schools have been re-opened since independence. Such language planning activities, including the development of infrastructure, or educational facilities for learning the Kazakh language have been aimed at the restoration or revitalization of the Kazakh language. Therefore, legal frameworks and linguistic and educational policies such as “Kazakhization” were introduced by the Kazakhstani government, in order to increase the status of Kazakh, and the number of users of the Kazakh language (Smagulova, 2016).

Despite such positive intentions on the part of Kazakh families towards the education of their children, most Russian-dominant Kazakh students are still facing a host of difficulties that are associated with content comprehension or lack of motivation while studying in schools with KMI. For those children, who listened to and spoke only Russian from an early age, going to a Kazakh-medium school means “switching to a language other than the language or languages used at home” (de Jong, 2011, p. 76), thus, it may be challenging for these children to study in Kazakh-medium schools.

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to explore the challenges of eighth grade Russian-dominant Kazakh students studying in a Kazakh-medium school in Nur-Sultan, disentangle the factors that caused these challenges, and uncover the LLSs deployed by these students while studying through KMI. Thus, to accomplish the purpose of the current research, the above research questions have been addressed:

1. What challenges did the sampled participants face in studying in a Kazakh-medium school?

2. What contextual factors influenced the participants' Kazakh language learning experiences?
3. How did they deal with these challenges (i.e., their strategy uses)?

Significance of the Study

Amantay et al.'s (2017) empirical study is considered one of the very few empirical studies that explored why Kazakh parents tended to send their children to Kazakh-medium schools. They found that the main reasons included a sense of having a strong bond with the Kazakh culture, and their inability to speak Kazakh with their children at home. Nevertheless, it seems crucial to further identify the challenges that Russian speaking Kazakh children are likely to face during their education in Kazakh-medium schools, along with the language learning strategies they use or intend to deploy to address these challenges.

Thus, this empirical study can contribute to the body of literature devoted to the challenges of students who study in a second language as a medium of instruction around the world. In addition, research with this type of focus has not been sparsely conducted in the context of Kazakhstan. Therefore, this study can be regarded as an initial step towards capturing Russian-dominant Kazakh students' voices and understanding their struggles with studying in the second language. Notably, this research study can also be beneficial to policymakers in Kazakhstan because the findings of this study can help them understand the problems faced by these students. This, in turn, may encourage them to take practical steps to adjust the existing educational process in Kazakh-medium schools. By doing this, the challenges that Russian-dominant Kazakh students face can be lessened.

It is worth noting that by investigating the LLS uses of Russian-dominant Kazakh students studying in the Kazakh language, the findings of this research can help other students who are experiencing some challenges in KMI classrooms to overcome them, by

recognizing the strategies used by their peers. In addition, this study can contribute to the literature of the field of LLSs, which has been largely focused on English as a target language. In other words, this is the first empirical study that aims to capture students' strategic learning efforts while learning Kazakh as a target language. Further, most previous LLS studies have largely embraced the cognitive perspective by restricting the use of LLSs to refer to linguistic competence and using questionnaire surveys to present a static nature of LLSs, without giving sufficient attention to the importance of the social, historical, and political-economic situations in which a language learner is operating (see Hajar, 2019; Gao, 2010). By contrast, the present study employs two qualitative methods, namely narrative writing and individual semi-structured interviews, and is underpinned by a sociocultural outlook and Darwin and Norton's (2015) model of investment to capture the continuous interaction between participants' actual strategy use and the fundamental processes in specific contexts.

Outline of the Study

This chapter explained the personal motivation of the researcher to conduct this study. It also provided the background information related to the given research, its purpose, the research questions, and the significance of the study. The next chapter presents the literature review according to the researched topic; thus, it starts with the description of the differences between first and second language acquisition, as well as childhood bilingualism. Furthermore, it disentangles linguistic and content comprehension challenges of studying in the second language. Finally, it provides the analysis of the literature on language learning strategies (LLSs) research. In addition, it pays attention to a sociocultural perspective on LLSs and explains its implementation in the current research, as well as presents the conceptual framework which was adopted during this study; namely, Darwin and Norton's (2015) model of investment. The third chapter focuses on

methodology by describing the research design, the research site and sampling, data collection procedures and its methods, data analysis, and ethical considerations. The main findings of this research are explained in the fourth chapter, while the discussion of the main findings, with reference to the theoretical framework and related literature is presented in the fifth chapter. The final chapter is dedicated to the main conclusions and implications of this study. It also provides recommendations for further research and suggestions for different stakeholders.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The previous chapter focused on delineating the background information about the linguistic profile of Kazakhstan, and the researcher's personal experience in studying through the medium of Kazakh. Moreover, the research problems and purposes, research questions, and the significance of the study were presented. The present chapter is divided into four sections. The first part aims at providing information on childhood bilingualism, along with the main differences between first and second language acquisition. Afterward, the possible linguistic and academic challenges of studying in an additional language will be described, with reference to the literature. The third part provides the definitions and classifications of language learning strategies (LLSs), in addition to justifying the adoption of a sociocultural perspective on LLSs in the current research. This chapter ends by describing the conceptual framework of this study, which is guided by Darwin' and Norton's (2015) conceptualization of motivation as an investment in learning language and its relation to the construct of identity, ideology, and capital.

Differences between First and Second Language Acquisition

As we live in a globalized world, most children in different countries are being exposed to more than one language in their childhoods. Thus, the notions of the native speaker, or the mother-tongue are becoming vaguer, and more abstract, because languages are not being perceived as the property of particular nations anymore; rather, they are being viewed as entities available for everyone (Schmitz, 2013). As Kalizhanova (2018) suggests, although most Kazakhs perceive the Kazakh language as their mother-tongue regardless of their backgrounds and language proficiency, it is important to identify how a language shift from Kazakh to Russian which occurred in Kazakhstan during the Soviet times has influenced the first and second language acquisition of Kazakh children today.

According to Lightbrown and Spada (2013), a child begins to distinguish their mother's voice among others while still in the womb. Children are also able to recognize the language which is spoken around their mother before birth. This is how children start to acquire their first language. From the earliest vocalizations such as crying, cooing, and gurgling children undergo various sequential stages of the first language acquisition, which are believed to be similar in almost all languages (Clark, 2009). Consequently, by the age of four, they develop basic vocabulary of that language and are capable of producing complete sentences, asking questions, and retelling stories. Thus, the language which is being learned in the first four years of a child can be defined as the first language (Ingram, 1989).

By contrast, Lightbrown and Spada (2013) state that the acquisition of the second language occurs when a child has already acquired one language. That is, while a child spends an enormous number of hours interacting with family, relatives, and other children using the first language, the second language learning often starts inside the classroom, where children are not essentially learning the language subconsciously through interaction and communication, but largely through putting intentional efforts in formal settings. Additionally, learners who start studying in their second language are sometimes forced to use it from the first days in order to meet their classroom requirements and answer their teachers' questions (Lightbrown & Spada, 2013).

It is noteworthy that the notion of the first language does not seem to be dependent on someone's nationality as a large number of Kazakh people tend to believe, but essentially on the time period, which starts even before birth. Thus, the Russian language can be perceived as the first language of those children whose parents used Russian for daily communication with them since birth (Kalizhanova, 2018).

Childhood Bilingualism

Kazakhstan's complex political, and sociolinguistic history such as "Russification" contributed to having Kazakhs and other ethnic minorities in Soviet Kazakhstan learn the Russian language in order to be accepted by the Soviet community (Ahn & Smagulova, 2016; Pavlenko, 2011; Smagulova, 2008). Thus, many Kazakh children are currently being raised by bilingual parents. Therefore, their language acquisition differs from that of monolingual children. Such children who learn more than one language in their childhood can be defined as "simultaneous bilinguals" (Genesee & Nicoladis, 2007). Although some studies on childhood bilingualism (e.g., Paradis et al., 2011) reported insignificant delays in learning one or more languages, there is still no concrete evidence that early bilingualism can influence the adequate linguistic development of the child. Conversely, Bialystok (2001) argues that the development of bilingual abilities at an early age can have a positive impact on a child's academic achievements. Moreover, having knowledge of "more than one language opens the door to many personal, social, and economic opportunities" (Lightbrown & Spada, 2013, p. 30). However, bilingual children's language learning can be affected by the circumstances in which one language is valued more than another within one community, or one language is spoken more by people around the child. As a result, that particular language can be utilized more frequently in preference to another, causing imbalance in language acquisition (De Houwer, 2017).

Although being exposed to both Kazakh and Russian languages in childhood, the children raised by the bilingual Russian-dominant Kazakh community - which appeared after the massive shift from Kazakh to Russian during the Soviet Union - are likely to hear their parents' communication prevailing in Russian. Therefore, despite obtaining the acquisition of more than one language, the Russian language proficiency of such children might surpass their Kazakh language knowledge. When bilingual Kazakh families enroll

their children at Kazakh-medium schools, children can still be experiencing challenges regarding their education in the Kazakh language. Accordingly, different studies on linguistic and academic challenges of studying in the second language (e.g., Gibbons, 2015; Melnikova, 2017) will be described in the coming section.

Challenges of Studying in the Second Language

This section presents examples of linguistic and content comprehension challenges that students from Asian, African, and European contexts often face while studying in an additional language. Krashen and Lee (2004) point out that the development of academic competence consists of two essential elements: proficiency in the academic language and comprehension of the specific subject. The former refers to the proficiency in the language of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) subjects, while the latter is connected with the level of content comprehension of these subjects (Krashen & Lee, 2004).

Linguistic Challenges

By reviewing the relevant literature (e.g., Ching et al., 2017; Cummins, 1981, 2000; De Wet, 2002; Gumarova, 2017; Lasagabaster, 2009; Melnikova, 2017; Rowland & Murray, 2019), it can be reported that students often struggle with diverse challenges during their education in a second language. As Cummins (2000) suggests, it takes one or two years in order to build one's basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) in the second language. However, a school is considered as a more abstract context where students need to develop their academic knowledge, which requires the acquisition of subject-specific language or academic vocabulary, and the development of adequate literacy skills (Gibbons, 2015). For example, Melnikova (2017) found that the first-year university Uzbek students from technical specialties who had Russian as a medium of instruction and studied in Russia had experienced problems related to the attainment of

Russian phonology, morphology, and orthography. This is because the grammar of the Uzbek language considerably differs from the grammar of the Russian language. For instance, as opposed to the Russian language, in the Uzbek language nouns are not differentiated according to gender. Hence, Uzbek students sometimes struggle to distinguish Russian words according to gender. Moreover, there are no simple and perfect verb forms in the Uzbek language, and hence students may confuse verbs while learning the Russian language, where verbs are divided according to various tenses including simple and perfect ones. Therefore, such interference of Uzbek causes difficulties for the acquisition of the Russian language (Melnikova, 2017).

Similarly, by completing a discourse analysis and reviewing the literature related to teaching the Russian language to non-native students, Rysaliyeva (2020) revealed that while learning Russian as the second language, Kyrgyz students may experience various linguistic problems caused by the interference of the mother-tongue (Kyrgyz). It can be described as an interaction of two linguistic systems in a bilingual context emerging either with linguistic contacts, or individual mastering of the second language, in which features of the native language affect the learning of the second language (Makhmadiyeva, 2018; Rysaliyeva, 2020). Thus, Kyrgyz students can struggle while learning the Russian language because of the phonetic differentiation between Kyrgyz and Russian, absence of gender categories of nouns, consonant clusters peculiar to the Russian language, but not Kyrgyz. Although Rysaliyeva's (2020) study investigated the challenges that Kyrgyz students faced while learning Russian as the second language, it did not focus on the challenges of students studying in Russian as the medium of instruction, but only as a subject.

In Kazakhstan, an empirical study was conducted by Gumarova (2017) on the challenges of teaching Geography in Kazakh as the second language in two Nazarbayev

Intellectual Schools (NIS) from teachers' perspective. The author revealed that it was hard for secondary school students (grade 7,8,9) with an insufficient level of Kazakh to understand their peers during their oral presentations of texts because of their accents and pronunciation. Gumarova (2017) also reported that students in both schools encountered a difficulty in expressing their thoughts and answering questions about subject material in the Kazakh language because of their insufficient repertoire of academic vocabulary in Kazakh. Therefore, these students tended to misinterpret the material by using wrong or inappropriate words. Although Gumarova's (2017) study gave insightful findings on the challenges of teaching geography in Kazakh as the second language, her study was conducted from teachers' perspective and hence the voice of students was missing. Therefore, this study aims at considering the challenges of studying in Kazakh as a medium of instruction (KMI) from the perspective of Russian-dominant students whose voices are not sufficiently taken into account in Kazakhstan for a long time.

According to Zisahni (2013), numerous language learners confront various problems related to insufficient language knowledge in which they are studying. Students are sometimes forced to study and communicate in a language that is not used in their homes. Consequently, it not only affects the academic achievements of students, but also may cause social trauma and emotional problems (Cummins, 1976). Echoing this point, De Wet (2002) underlines that studying in a second language can be perceived as a traumatic experience that might delay students' academic development. For example, Mingpao's (2003) quantitative questionnaire study with 564 secondary school Chinese students in Hong Kong in 15 Chinese-medium schools revealed that students from these schools who chose to study the whole curriculum through English as a medium of instruction (EMI) obtained the lowest scores in the standardized Hong Kong Certificate of Education

Examination. Thus, the academic achievements of those students declined when switching to EMI (as cited in Lai, 2004).

Another problem is related to language proficiency skills. For instance, Ching et al. (2017) revealed that their Chinese participants studying in American universities through the medium of English encountered a number of problems connected to the development of reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills, attributable to their possible limited English proficiency. Consequently, most participants, as reported by Ching et al. (2017), needed more time to complete their academic assignments, and hence they had less time to spend with individuals outside the classroom. Also, a small-scale qualitative study conducted by Rowland and Murray (2019) in an Italian State University with 12 biomedical master's students showed that EMI was time-consuming as students had to read all the materials in English which was their second language, and listened to the recorded lectures multiple times, which was not a necessity while studying in a mother-tongue.

Furthermore, it can be hard for all students regardless of their home languages to learn new complicated concepts and contexts, academic vocabulary, and terms in schools. However, those students who study in their mother-tongues are likely to be able to use a wide range of familiar sentence structures and vocabulary, whereas it can be problematic for students who study in the second language (Gibbons, 2015). For example, Cuevas (2005) posits that it can be challenging for non-native English speakers to solve mathematical problems because their description usually includes complex syntactic structures such as "if...then", or "larger than". Also, while interviewing in-service teachers of immigrant students of the Basque Autonomous Community, whose home language was Spanish, but they studied in Basque, Lasagabaster (2009) found that some participants did not struggle when studying math or physics as they comprehended the international symbolic language. However, in other subjects such as history or philosophy, it was

difficult for them to cope with the required level of abstraction, on the grounds that they did not obtain the necessary language competence. Thus, Cummins (2000) states that it takes seven years for a student to acquire Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) in the second language and reach the level of a native speaker of the same age. However, students' academic learning cannot be stopped while they are acquiring the language of instruction (Gibbons, 2015). Therefore, this leads us to another major challenge of studying in a second language, namely, content comprehension.

Challenges of Content Comprehension

Content comprehension is another aspect that students who study in a second language struggle with during their education, since they need to learn not only language but content through that language in oral and written forms simultaneously (Gibbons, 2015). Without a proper language proficiency level, it can be difficult to comprehend the content in the second language. Hence, the linguistic challenges might cause problems of content comprehension of students studying in the second language. For instance, Kinyaduka and Kiwara (2013) explored the perceptions of students, teachers, and parents towards the influence of EMI on content comprehension in Tanzania, where English is an official language along with Swahili. Their study revealed that 69.5% of students had an inadequate level of content acquisition of subjects taught in English. Additionally, 79.8% of teachers claimed that studying in English caused a delay in students' high academic performance.

Huang (2012) also suggests that students who study in a foreign environment are required to be aware of various cultural aspects of the language in which they are studying. Otherwise, what is perceived as common-sense for one learner can be seen as a novelty, which is hard to acquire for another. For instance, during one of the interviews of the ethnographic case study of Goodman (2014), one of the participants, which was a teacher

at Alfred Nobel University in Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine, who conducted classes in EMI, indicated that during her lessons, the Nigerian students, whose mother-tongue was English were engaged in the educational process, while the Ukrainian students did not understand jokes, humor, or movies in English; thus, she needed to use enforcement in order to involve them in discussions.

Other Challenges

In Kazakhstan, students sometimes face other challenges, attributable to some peculiarities of the Kazakh culture. For example, many Kazakh people believe that Kazakhs who do not speak Kazakh are “manqurts”, or "shala Kazakhs", which can be translated as "half Kazakhs" without taking into consideration the social backgrounds of these people and historical events such as massive Russification that occurred in the past (Sugirbayeva, 2019). Therefore, there is a belief in Kazakhstan that those people who cannot speak their "mother tongue" do not respect the culture, traditions, and legacy of our ancestors.

Hence, by being aware of such a negative attitude towards Russian-dominant Kazakhs, students who only spoke Russian at home might feel ashamed or isolated in Kazakh classrooms. Moreover, others in classrooms might make fun of those students' Russian accents, or poor vocabulary in Kazakh. Consequently, they can experience motivational challenges of participating in classroom discussions or answering teachers' questions. For example, Darimbet (2018) posits that some Kazakhs are joking and teasing other Kazakhs with Russian background who are trying to speak the Kazakh language because of their mistakes, and pronunciation. Subsequently, they sometimes feel ashamed of speaking Kazakh.

Understanding Language Learning Strategies

As shown in the earlier sections, almost all previous studies focused on students' challenges while paying scant attention to the strategies used by these students to face their challenges. Therefore, some researchers in the area of language learning (e.g., Cohen, 2011; Gao, 2010; Macaro, 2001; Oxford, 2017) have proposed that one way for students to overcome such situations is to adopt a particular set of language learning strategies (LLSs) that pay attention to their specific learning settings and goals. Therefore, the present study explores both the participants' challenges of studying through the medium of Kazakh, and their LLSs, to overcome diverse linguistic and academic challenges. Hence, this part will explore the literature about the development of the construct of LLSs, major criticisms, and sociocultural perspective on LLSs.

Development of the Construct of LLSs: Characteristics of a “Good Language Learner”

In the mid-1970s there was a growing interest in researching LLSs because of unsuccessful attempts to study language teaching methods on the basis of the fact that good teaching results in good learning (Cohen et al., 2011). Hajar (2019) indicates that at that time most researchers tended to believe that the process of language learning was the responsibility of language teachers, and hence they paid specific attention to teachers' teaching methods rather than to the characteristics of language learners and the strategies they can deploy to learn and master the target language. Thus, Rubin (1975) is considered the first scholar who attempted to identify the importance of studying LLSs used by “good language learner” (GLL), as it was believed that by capturing the strategies used by GLLs, these strategies can be taught to their less successful counterparts. After thorough observations of English-speaking classrooms in Californian and Hawaiian contexts, Rubin (1975) identified seven LLSs that are essentially used by GLLs:

- making justified assumptions when not confident
- willing to analyze and correct mistakes

- concentrating on language patterns
- taking into account the meaning of the language
- paying attention to their own speech and the speech of others
- taking every opportunity to practice the target language
- having an immense motivation to interact and learn from interaction, or communication

Moreover, other LLS scholars (e.g., Griffiths, 2018; Stern, 1975) worked on identifying strategies deployed by GLLs according to their own observations, teaching and learning experiences, analysis of the literature, and comparisons with Rubin's (1975) strategies. Thus, by simplifying and adapting Stern's (1975) strategies, Griffiths (2018) developed them accordingly:

- experimenting
- planning
- developing a new language into an ordered system
- revising progressively
- searching for meaning
- practicing
- using the language in real communication
- self-monitoring
- learning to think in the target language (p. 425)

Nevertheless, despite Stern's contribution to the field of LLSs, Griffiths (2018) claimed that in Stern's (1975) characterization of LLSs of successful students, some terms such as "strategy" and "learning style" were not distinguished accurately. Furthermore, by conducting empirical research on GLLs, Naiman et al. (1978) interviewed 34 English-

speaking students who learned French, then concluded and identified five strategies important for good language learning which are:

- implementing an active task method
- perceiving language as a separate system
- using the language in authentic communication
- monitoring the target language performance and adapting it
- managing the affective demands of language learning (p. 225)

Moreover, Chamot (2001) mentioned six important characteristics of GLL such as “active learning, monitoring language production, practicing communication in the language, making use of prior linguistic knowledge, using different memorization techniques, and asking questions for clarification” (p. 29).

Despite the development of such multifaceted strategies of GLLs suggested by different researchers (Chamot, 2001; Naiman et al., 1978; Rubin, 1975; Stern, 1975), they were not contextually sensitive, along with paying less attention to the salience of the mediating role of individual differences of language learners. As Grenfell (2000) notes, "what works for one learner may not work for another" (p.14). Thus, Norton and Toohey (2001) offered a more comprehensive understanding of the strategies of GLL, stating that the proficiency of good language learners not only depends on their individual actions but also the influence of different communities. Therefore, it is crucial to take into consideration not only learners' individual characteristics, but also contexts in which students are developing in order to assist their language learning (Norton & Toohey, 2001). Moreover, Norton and Toohey (2001) pointed out the importance of “human agency” which can be interpreted as individuals’ ability to act as proactive agents when recognizing the importance of a particular activity in order to accomplish their goals, and which is

considered as a vital component of identifying the successful strategies of GLL (Benson and Cooker, 2013).

Definition and Classification of LLSs

LLSs are often defined as "the learner's consciously chosen tools for active, self-regulated improvement of language learning" (Oxford, 2014, p. 30). Echoing this point, Cohen (2012) states that LLSs are "thoughts and actions, consciously chosen and operationalized by language learners to assist them in carrying out a multiplicity of tasks from the very onset of learning to the most advanced levels of target-language performance" (p. 136). Similarly, Rose (2015) states that LLSs are "processes and actions that are consciously deployed by language learners to help them to learn or use a language more effectively" (p. 421-422). As can be seen, the definitions above put forward consciousness as the essential element of LLSs which can contribute to learners' cognitive development. This is because it is difficult for people to learn anything without comprehending what is going on around them (Griffiths, 2018). Thus, according to Griffiths (2018), when people act automatically or habitually, it does not mean that they are not understanding the goals or importance of particular actions. Therefore, even learning behavior can be described as habitual as we can automatically choose strategies without pondering upon them too much (Griffiths, 2018). However, Griffiths (2018) states that such automatism in strategy selection depends on the proficiency of the learner. For example, learners who have just started acquiring the language select strategies carefully and thoroughly, while experienced learners can deal with strategy selection without barely thinking about it.

Moving to the categorization of LLSs it is important to analyze the classification made by Rubin (1981), and Oxford (1990). First of all, as stated before, Rubin (1975) was the first to study LLSs, and identify strategies of successful learners that might be used

during learning of less successful students. Thus, she developed the notion of GLL.

Moreover, Rubin (1981) distinguished strategies that contribute to the successful acquisition of the second language, either directly through inductive inference, and memorization, or indirectly by using practice opportunities or production tricks.

Nonetheless, the classification of Rubin (1975, 1981) was criticized by Cohen (2011) who claimed that this conceptualization mainly concentrated on classroom practices only, and originated from the dependence of learning on teaching. As for other factors, individual characteristics and social contexts were not included in the research.

Next, Oxford (1990) contributed to the development of LLS by introducing her strategy inventory for language learning (SILL) which was divided into six strategy groups: memory, cognitive, metacognitive, compensation, affective, and social. This classification was adopted in the current study. Oxford (1990) further grouped these strategies into direct (memory, cognitive, compensational), and indirect (metacognitive, affective, social) strategies. More specifically, Oxford (1990) states that direct strategies are based on the direct involvement of the target language, and demand mental processing of the language:

Memory Strategies. These strategies obtain a specific focus by helping learners to accumulate and retrieve information. Therefore, memory strategies function by creating mental links with the help of classifying new linguistic knowledge into groups, associating new words with concepts that have already existed in one's memory, and placing new words in a sentence or conversation in order to remember their meanings. Moreover, memory strategies can operate by involving imagery, keywords, semantic maps, representation of sounds in a memory while learning a language. Also, memory strategies include reviewing the material according to particular time spaces, physically reacting to

new words, and using tangible techniques by moving and changing something to absorb new information.

Cognitive Strategies. They are believed to be widely used by language learners as they can help them to master and transform the target language (Oxford, 1990, 2011). Hence, the examples of cognitive strategies used in language learning are repeating, practicing orally and with written systems, paying attention to new language patterns, practicing in authentic settings, making analysis to find the main ideas, using different resources, analyzing across languages, translating, taking notes, and summarizing new knowledge.

Compensation Strategies. In spite of possible problems related to the learners' linguistic skills, compensation strategies – as suggested by Oxford (1990) – help to overcome linguistic limitations and allow learners to comprehend and produce new language. Thus, learners' who adopt compensation strategies tend to use linguistic clues, and guess intelligently. Moreover, such learners may switch to their mother-tongue, use mime or gestures, avoid communication, select topics according to the level of their linguistic knowledge, coin new words, and use synonyms in order to deal with limitations in speaking and writing.

Indirect strategies can be considered as strategies that assist language learning without direct involvement of the target language (Oxford, 1990).

Metacognitive Strategies. Metacognitive strategies are perceived as a significant part of language learning since they give learners an opportunity to organize their own language learning process. Therefore, they focus on centering the learning, finding out about language learning, setting clear goals, organizing and arranging the learning processes, searching for practice opportunities, and self-evaluating.

Affective Strategies. Affective strategies are related to learners' emotions, attitudes, and feelings during the language learning process. As negative emotions can hinder successful learning, learners can practice to control their emotions and feelings through affective strategies which consist of lowering anxiety with the help of relaxation, music and laughter, self-encouragement strategies, and an ability to take emotional temperature by listening to the body, or writing a language diary.

Social Strategies. As language and communication are considered inseparable entities, language learning can always be influenced and mediated by other people. Therefore, social strategies are believed to be one of the essential types of strategies among learners. Such strategies include collaborating with peers or other proficient language users, requesting clarification or correction, and empathizing with other people by becoming aware of their thoughts and feelings, and developing intercultural competence.

Major Criticisms of LLS Research

The discussion above was mostly driven by the cognitive perspective; thus, this section will analyze the criticisms and limitations of cognitive LLS research.

First of all, cognitivism views LLS as individual achievements without paying attention to “epistemological insights from contextuality” (Ortega, 2011, p. 167). That is, a cognitive perspective tends to depict the individualistic and static form of the learner by assigning the learner's achievements to his/her motivation and cognitive traits (Gao & Zhang, 2011). In such a perspective the learning context and settings in which education occurs are excluded from consideration. Thus, language learners are perceived as “decontextualized cognitive beings, acting upon language input and producing output” (Barkhuizen et al., 2014, p. 11). However, Gao (2010) argues that “language learning takes place not just in individual learners' minds but also in a society” (p. 18). Similarly, Duff

and Talmy (2011) describe language learners as individuals with sociohistorical, sociocultural, and sociopolitical backgrounds.

Moreover, due to the evolution of various strategy taxonomies, survey-based methods started to be utilized while studying LLSs. More specifically, Oxford's (1990) SILL has been widely used in research that evaluated LLSs and can be characterized as the questionnaire constructed to assess learners' frequency of using strategies rather than certain representations of learners' strategies used in order to complete a particular language activity. Thus, there are several weaknesses of using self-reported questionnaires in researching LLSs which were explained by Dörnyei (2005), Gao (2004) and Hajar (2019). Firstly, the influence of context on strategy use is not appropriately considered in strategy questionnaires. It means that these questionnaires can be overgeneralized, so learners can misinterpret some questions due to different social and cultural backgrounds because strategy questionnaires "do not appear to apply equally well to all learners irrespective of different educational and social backgrounds" (Hajar, 2019, p. 23). Secondly, there is the obscurity of comprehending if questionnaires are evaluating what they intended to evaluate. For example, a learner might receive high scores on several questions in the memory scale without being good at using memory strategies (Dörnyei, 2005). Finally, questionnaires can view LLS as a static phenomenon by taking into account only frequency and preferences in strategy use rather than focusing on dynamism and the development of someone's strategy use (Gao, 2004). Furthermore, participants' answers from questionnaires might be laconic, showing only numbers. Thus, there are doubts that students' LLS psychological traits can be identified and explored by quantitative questionnaires.

Thus, the analysis of major criticisms of LLS research revealed that it is crucial to understand the significance of context and task impact while studying LLSs. Therefore, to

research the multifaceted use of LLSs it can be advantageous to use sociocultural approaches, namely qualitative methods that are specifically designed to investigate the dynamism and complexity of LLSs. Hence, the sociocultural perspective and its implications in LLS research will be discussed further, given that this perspective is utilized in the present study.

Towards a Sociocultural Perspective on LLSs

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that the cognitive perspective on LLS research has major drawbacks such as focusing on individualism and presenting a static picture of a learner's LLS use. Therefore, the LLS research has been moving towards a "social turn" in language education which is perceived as a "new dimension to the study of learning strategies" taking into account learners' agency (Palfreyman, 2003, p. 245). In this sense, LLSs from a sociocultural perspective are the outcome of an ongoing interaction between the learner himself/herself and different contextual realities such as teachers' practices, peers' mediation, parents' involvement, assessment modes and the availability of enabling language learning resources (Gao, 2010). Thus, instead of using quantitative questionnaires and surveys where data collection may result in obtaining limited information, there is a shift towards "social turn" which gives opportunities to adopt qualitative methodologies while investigating LLSs (Block, 2014; Palfreyman, 2006; Rose et al., 2018). Furthermore, Gao (2010) states that while LLS research from a cognitive outlook has viewed language learners as individuals dealing with language-related information and abilities, from a sociocultural perspective they are perceived as social beings who have diverse identities that can be differentiated by status, ethnicity, and gender, that can influence their attitudes to learning. In other words, they are regarded as active agents, who are in active inquiry of both language skills and non-linguistic matter

connected with individual's identity construction and development (Benson & Cooker, 2013; Norton, 2013).

Huang and Andrews (2010) argue that two essential notions connect LLS with sociocultural research, namely, "strategic interaction with contexts, and goal-orientation" (p. 20). It means that learners select and use their LLSs regarding the attainment of specific learning goals that are connected with material language resources, and constructed according to aid, or interference of various social agents, namely parents and language teachers (Hajar, 2017). Learner agency is also crucial when researching LLSs as it shows the ability to use social resources and modify identities within the learning context (Norton & Toohey, 2001). Thus, in order to analyze the attitude of learners to the evolving social world, and understand the interrelation of their willingness and engagement to learn languages and multifaceted identities, Norton (2013) introduced the term "investment" in language learning research which can be described as commitment to language learning, and which is dependent on learners' purposeful decision and willingness to engage in language learning process. In turn, Norton (2013) described "identity" as "how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how the relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future" (p. 4). Also, Norton (2013) argued that language learning is not solely dependent on contextual factors, but on the agentive power of individuals which is revealed while understanding the significance of a particular activity. Thus, learners can develop their LLSs to become "whomever they want to be" (Hajar, 2019, p. 54). For example, when studying the strategic language learning efforts and the development of the second language identity of a female postgraduate student named Noura from a rural area of Iraq, Hajar (2016) discovered that because of her goal and desire to become the first female in her village who obtained a postgraduate degree abroad, Noura acted agentively in order to achieve the required score

in the test of English as a foreign language (TOEFL), and attain her individual ambitions. More specifically, she used some “voluntary strategies” which were largely internalized by the learner without the involvement of others. Examples of these strategies were watching several English programs or communicating with her Canadian colleague that were not influenced by other agents, namely her English teachers, as in “compulsory/other-imposed strategies” (Hajar, 2016).

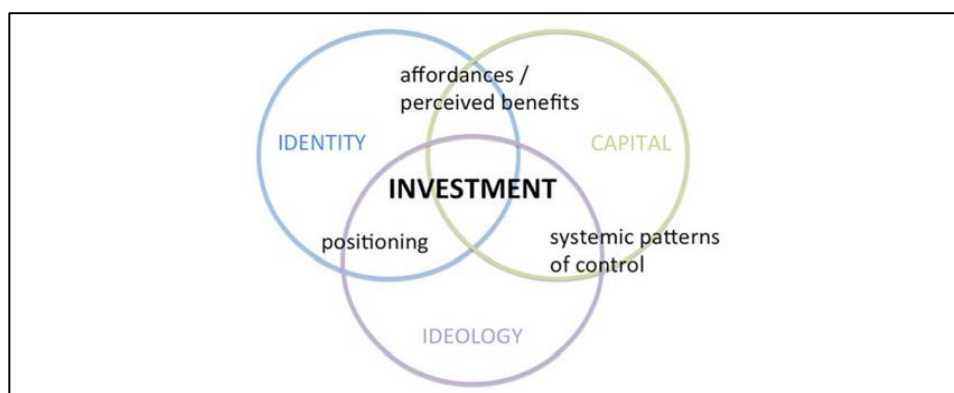
Therefore, as sociocultural perspective in LLS research is closely connected with such concepts as identity and investment, Darwin and Norton’s (2015) model of investment which focuses on ideology, capital, and identity will be adopted as a conceptual framework of this study.

Conceptual Framework

In response to the changing patterns of the globalized world that result in the creation of new relations of power in various domains on micro and macro levels including language education and applied linguistics, Norton, by cooperating with Darwin developed an expanded model in which investment in language learning functions at the crossroads of identity, capital, and ideology (Darvin & Norton, 2015; see figure 1).

Figure 1

David and Norton’s (2015) Model of Investment



Source: David and Norton (2015)

The concept of ideology originates from the work of Bourdieu (1987, 1991), in which it is possible to differentiate learners in diverse ways according to race, ethnicity, gender, social status even before they start communicating. Therefore, the analysis of ideology allows us to explore the essence of capital and its influence on investment (Clement & Norton, 2020). Bourdieu (1986) differentiates between economic capital, which includes wealth, property and income, cultural capital, which embraces cultural knowledge, and social capital, which emphasizes relations of power in a society. Thus, according to this model, one of the reasons for investing in language learning is learners' ambitions to expand their capitals as well as to acknowledge the capitals they already own (Clement & Norton, 2020). This model pays special attention to how language learners' capital asserts their identities and gives opportunities to communicate as legitimate speakers of the target language in various learning contexts (Darvin & Norton, 2016).

The term "investment" plays a significant role in language learning theory as it reveals the socially and historically established connection between language learners' identity and commitment (Darvin & Norton, 2016). Consequently, "investment" highlights the contribution of human agency and identity in combined material and symbolic capital, "in having stakes in the endeavor and in preserving in that endeavor" (Kramsch, 2013, p. 195). That is, learners have certain understandings and expectations of acquiring a greater possibility of utilizing symbolic and economic resources while investing in a language (David & Norton, 2016). Although investment is considered as a sociological counterpart to the psychological term "motivation" (e.g., Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009), it views language learners as social individuals with complex identities that are able to change from time to time, whereas the concept of motivation considers that learners have one unitary identity with various personal traits (Bourdieu, 1987, 1991). Thus, a language learner can have high motivation to learn a particular language, and still may not invest in learning because

of possible negative practices in the classroom (Norton, 2013). Oxford (2017) points out that although Norton's focus was not on LLSs, learners tend to exercise their agency by utilizing a specific set of LLSs when they understand the significance of a particular activity. As Oxford (2017) aptly remarks, "if the learner makes the decision to invest, it should be followed by a host of cognitive, affective and other strategies to make the investment successful" (p. 192). Additionally, "the social strategy of finding allies will also turn to be essential if investment is undertaken" (Oxford, 2017, p. 192). Therefore, the research reported in this thesis has adopted Darwin and Norton's (2015) model of investment by exploring the challenges and LLSs use of Russian-dominant Kazakh students while studying in the Kazakh-medium school. It also aims to understand how the various contextual factors (e.g., the role of mediating social agents such as parents, peers, and teachers, and assessment mode) can influence the students' experiences and perceptions of studying in the Kazakh language.

In order to conduct empirical studies on language learning and identity construction, different researchers adopted Darwin and Norton's (2015) model of investment (e.g., Cao & Newton, 2019; Hajar, 2017; Jiang, 2018; Karam et al., 2017; Sung, 2019). However, these studies focused on learning the English language either in Anglophone or in non-Anglophone contexts. Therefore, there is a need to go beyond the investigation of English language learning by exploring other languages through the framework of the investment. Thus, while examining the challenges and strategy use of Russian-dominant learners studying in Kazakh-medium schools, this study will adopt Darwin & Norton's (2015) expanded model of investment which was described above.

Conclusion

Overall, this chapter presented the differences of first and second language acquisition alongside with childhood bilingualism in order to understand the linguistic

development of children from the bilingual contexts and create possible links with the Kazakhstani bilingual children. After that, relevant studies from different contexts were described. The third part discussed the development of LLS notion, starting with Rubin's (1975) conceptualization of GLL, and moving towards the definitions and different categorizations of LLS. Furthermore, it dwelt upon major criticisms of LLS research, namely its cognitive and static nature, which deprives researchers of an opportunity to scrutinize learners' LLS use by focusing on cognitive and individualistic processes without considering the interaction between the learning contexts and learner agency. Thus, it led us to the examination of a sociocultural perspective on LLS research in which language learning is interlaced with learning environments and contexts as well as learner agency, investment, and identities that impact the selection and use of LLS. Finally, Darwin and Norton's (2015) model of investment, which can be perceived as an amalgamation of ideology, identity and capital, was presented as the conceptual framework under which this study is conducted.

Chapter 3. Methodology

Introduction

The previous chapter focused on reviewing the literature connected to the different types of challenges that students often encounter during their education in the second language. It also explained the theoretical underpinnings related to the field of language learning strategies (LLSs), together with rationalizing the adoption of Darvin and Norton's (2015) model of investment associated with the sociocultural perspective on LLS research in the present study. Notably, this is the first qualitative study that disentangles the challenges and LLS use of a group of Russian-dominant Kazakh students who study in Kazakh-medium schools from the sociocultural perspective which contributes to the multifaceted investigation of given phenomena as it underpins the ideologies, investment, and context of the participants. In order to accomplish this aim, the following research questions, presented at the end of Chapter 1, need to be answered:

1. What challenges did sampled participants face while studying in a Kazakh-medium school?
2. What contextual factors influenced the participants' Kazakh language learning experiences?
3. How did they deal with these challenges (i.e., their strategy uses)?

Therefore, this chapter focuses on a research design that identifies reasons for implementing a qualitative case-study method, data collection tools such as narrative writing, and one-on-one semi-structured online interviews, research site and sample, data collection procedures, data analysis, and ethical considerations related to this study.

Research Design

To conduct this research, a qualitative approach has been chosen because it helps to study "the qualities of entities, processes, and meanings that are not experimentally

examined or measured in terms of quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013, p.17). In addition, the qualitative approach was adopted in order to capture the actual and situated use of participants’ LLSs mediated and influenced by various factors including the practices of teachers, and parents’ involvement. Almost all previous studies in the field of LLSs used quantitative methods to examine students’ preferences of their LLS uses rather than their actual and dynamic uses of LLSs in a specific context. For several reasons, an instrumental case study method was adopted, where a researcher is able to choose “cases” and conduct an in-depth analysis of a phenomenon (Stake, 1995).

First of all, as this research centers on a specific group of people, Russian-dominant Kazakhs in Kazakh-medium schools, it analyzes “how particular groups of people confront specific problems” (Shaw, 1978 as cited in Merriam, 1988, p.2). In addition, as this study seeks to help different stakeholders recognize the different problems of Russian-speaking students by manifesting their voices, and viewpoints on the challenges they often face during their education, a case study method enhanced this research because it elucidates a reader's comprehension of the phenomenon under investigation, or leads to its reconsideration (Stake, 2013). A multiple or collective case study is an instrumental case study which focuses on a variety of cases in order to examine a specific phenomenon (Stake, 1995). As Shkedi (2005) states, despite such type of case study introduces the cases jointly, “each single case study is portrayed with its unique features and context” (p. 21). Shkedi (2005) also suggests that an instrumental multiple case study produces a “thick description of different perspectives about a particular phenomenon through investigating both similarities and differences among the cases’ characteristics to capture an in-depth understanding of the given phenomenon” (p. 21).

Thus, a qualitative multiple case study method has been adopted to delineate the multiple perspectives of situated experiences of Russian-dominant eighth grade students

who study in a Kazakh-medium school in terms of learning through the medium of Kazakh, underlying their language strategy uses.

Research Site and Sample

Homogeneous sampling was used to select people who can contribute to the deep investigation of the phenomenon, as it allows a researcher to explore a particular subgroup with similar features very thoroughly (Creswell, 2014). Hence, for this research, such a subgroup included eight Russian-dominant Kazakh students of the eighth grade of one of the Kazakh-medium schools of Nur-Sultan. Stake (2013) claims that a researcher should choose four to ten cases in a multiple case study design. As a result, this study centered on eight cases following the discussion of this issue with the researcher's thesis supervisor and some colleagues. Additionally, Hennink et al., (2011) state that the number of participants in qualitative studies is likely to be small as recruiting a big number of participants can be "neither practical nor beneficial" (p. 88).

More specifically, the students of the eighth grade were chosen because at this stage of their education they start studying a great variety of school subjects, including physics, chemistry, biology, computer science, and others (Ministry of Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2018), so there are more opportunities to identify different challenges that students might face during these lessons. Moreover, this qualitative study focused mainly on students' experiences rather than teachers' perceptions because the voice of students was almost missing in previous research in the Kazakhstani context. A school in Nur-Sultan was selected according to the location, and reputation, which is connected to the number of Russian-dominant students in the school. The chosen school was established in 2004 and is located in Almaty district, Nur-Sultan. Education is provided in the Kazakh language only, and there are five classes of the eighth grade. This information was gathered through gatekeepers, "individuals who have an official or unofficial role in the

site" (Creswell, 2014, p. 233). To select participants among the students of a Kazakh-medium school for the research, the researcher found the email address of the school online and sent the details of the study, namely the explanation of the purpose, research questions, and the significance of this study, as well as anonymity and confidentiality issues, and participants rights to the principal, asking her to allow the researcher to collect data online from the participants. After sharing this information with class teachers, and after obtaining the ethics approval from Institutional Research Ethics Committee (IREC), the researcher was allowed to present the consent forms to them. In order to approach the students and their parents, the researcher asked the teachers to share the information about this research and the consent forms via parental "WhatsApp" mobile group chats. Consequently, this study sampled eight Russian-dominant Kazakh students (see table 1). The reason why all the participants were selected from the same school is that due to the current situation of the global pandemic, getting access to several research sites has become complicated.

Table 1

Demographic Data of the Participants

Participants	Age	Gender	Birthplace	Family background notes
Almira	14	Female	Nur-Sultan	Her father is a taxi driver and her mother is an accountant
Askar	14	Male	Pavlodar	His father is a lawyer and her mother is a housewife
Alikhan	14	Male	Nur-Sultan	His father was a government clerk and his mother was a housewife

Participants	Age	Gender	Birthplace	Family background notes
Damir	14	Male	Temirtau	His father is a physician and his mother is a cosmetologist
Karina	14	Female	Oskemen	Her father is a businessman and her mother is a Chemistry teacher
Nurlan	13	Male	Oskemen	His parents are dentists
Samira	14	Female	Almaty	Her mother is a housewife
Talgat	14	Male	Zhaksy, Akmola oblast	His father is a deputy director of “Botanical Garden” in Nur-Sultan and his mother is an accountant

Source: compiled by the author from the obtained data

Data Collection Instruments

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the data was collected online via Zoom – a program for video conferencing. Two data collection methods, narrative writing and semi-structured interviews were used in this study to construct valid interview questions and obtain rich data from the participants.

Narrative Writing

One of the instruments the researcher used to collect her data was narrative writing. This research method was deployed in the current study in order to enable the researcher to attain some background information about the target participants and their past language learning experiences, along with helping her to construct subsequent interview questions. As Pavlenko (2007) remarks, asking the participants to write short essays about themselves and their learning experiences can be advantageous as it helps to obtain “insights into

people's private worlds, inaccessible to experimental methodologies, and thus provide the insider's view of the processes of language learning" (p.164-165). As a consequence, each participant in this study was asked to write about themselves and their Kazakh language learning experience in the form of an essay. The essay questions were sent to the participants by "WhatsApp" mobile messaging application. The participants were given seven days (26.10.2020-03.11.2020) to complete and send their essays to the researcher, and they were allowed to use the language with which they felt most comfortable. All eight participants preferred to use the Russian language to write their essays. They sent their essays to the researcher by using the "WhatsApp" application. In order to help them organize their thoughts, the participants were given the following questions to help them guide in writing their essays:

1. Could you please write some background information about yourself and your family? (e.g., your city/village, your family members, your parents' job etc.)
2. What languages do you and your family speak at home?
3. Which language(s) do you prefer to use inside and outside the classroom? Why?
4. Do you feel comfortable studying in a Kazakh-medium school? If yes/no, why?
5. What kind of challenges have you been facing while studying in the Kazakh language?
6. How are you dealing with these challenges?

Semi-structured Individual Online Interviews

Another research method used in this research study was a semi-structured individual online interview type. Marton (1986) mentions that the questions in semi-structured interviews should be "as open-ended as possible, in order to let the subject choose the dimensions of the question they want to answer" (p. 42). Consequently, the interviewees can share their perceptions of the studied phenomenon. This method enables

the researcher to attain a rich description of the participants' strategic learning efforts while confronting their different challenges, underlying their ongoing interaction with different contextual factors such as teachers' practices, parents' involvement, and assessment modes. Moreover, having the experience of being a Russian-dominant Kazakh student in a Kazakh classroom, it was convenient for the researcher to prepare a list of questions concerning the difficulties of studying in the Kazakh classroom from the insider's perspective; therefore, a semi-structured interview type corresponded well with this research as "it is suitable for the cases when the researcher has a good enough overview of the phenomenon or the domain" (Dörnyei, 2007, p.136). After informing the participants about their own rights, and the issues of anonymity and confidentiality due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the interviews were conducted online through "Zoom".

The use of Zoom was based on the students' preferences, since all of them were familiar with this program adopted by their schools. Its strengths include offering the ability to communicate in real time with geographically dispersed individuals, along with being able to "maintain eye contact and use gestures to express and develop shared meanings" (Webber, 2020, p. 341).

Each interview lasted from 25 to 35 minutes and was recorded with the researcher's laptop and smartphone. Taking into consideration the backgrounds of the students, they preferred to use the Russian language to express their own ideas freely; hence, the interviews were conducted in the Russian language despite the option to use the Kazakh language. However, one of the participants used both Kazakh and Russian when answering the researcher's questions. The interviews consisted of about 20 questions and included probes (see Appendix A).

Data Collection Procedures

First of all, after obtaining permission from IREC to conduct this research, the researcher sent an email to the school administration office in order to request access to the site and also to conduct research involving the participants who were the students at this school (Jonbekova, 2018). After that, the researcher set up a scheduled face to face appointment with the vice-principal of the school in order to further discuss the details of the research. After obtaining permission from the vice-principal and principal of the school, detailed information about the study was presented to class teachers of the eighth-grade students. As the sampling included the under -18 vulnerable population (namely Grade 8 students whose ages ranged between 13 and 14 years old), the class teachers were asked to send the consent letters with an explanation of the purpose of the research, the rights of the participants, and assurances of anonymity and confidentiality along with benefits and risks, and participants' rights to parental "WhatsApp" mobile group chats. The researcher was provided with the mobile numbers of children after getting the permission of their parents. The children were asked if they would like to participate in the research and provided with adequate information about the purpose of the study, the process and possible duration of data collection, the rights of the participants via "WhatsApp" - mobile messaging platform. Moreover, the researcher assured the participants of the importance of anonymity and confidentiality by explaining that their names will be substituted by pseudonyms, and the name of the school will not be mentioned in the study. The communication with parents and students was maintained in Russian, as the research sample included Russian-dominant students with Russian speaking families.

After receiving the participants' agreements, the researcher sent the essay questions (in Russian) to the participants through "WhatsApp" as it was more convenient for the participants to communicate through this mobile messaging platform rather than other

platforms of communication. Also, it was not possible to approach the participants face to face as secondary education in Kazakhstan switched to an online mode of learning due to the pandemic (MoES, 2020). As previously mentioned, the participants were given a seven-day time period to write and send their essays back to the researcher. After receiving the essays of the participants, one-on-one interviews through “Zoom” – the platform for online video conferences were set up by the researcher at the time that was the most convenient for each participant.

Before starting the interviews, the researcher explained the main aspects of the research and reminded the participants about their rights, the issues of anonymity and confidentiality, such as the substitution of the participants’ names, and data security. Moreover, the participants’ right to withdraw from the research at any moment was mentioned before the interviews. Also, the researcher obtained the participants’ oral permission to record the interviews for further transcription. Finally, at the end of the interviews, the participants were once again assured of anonymity and confidentiality, data security, and thanked for their participation and possible contribution to this study.

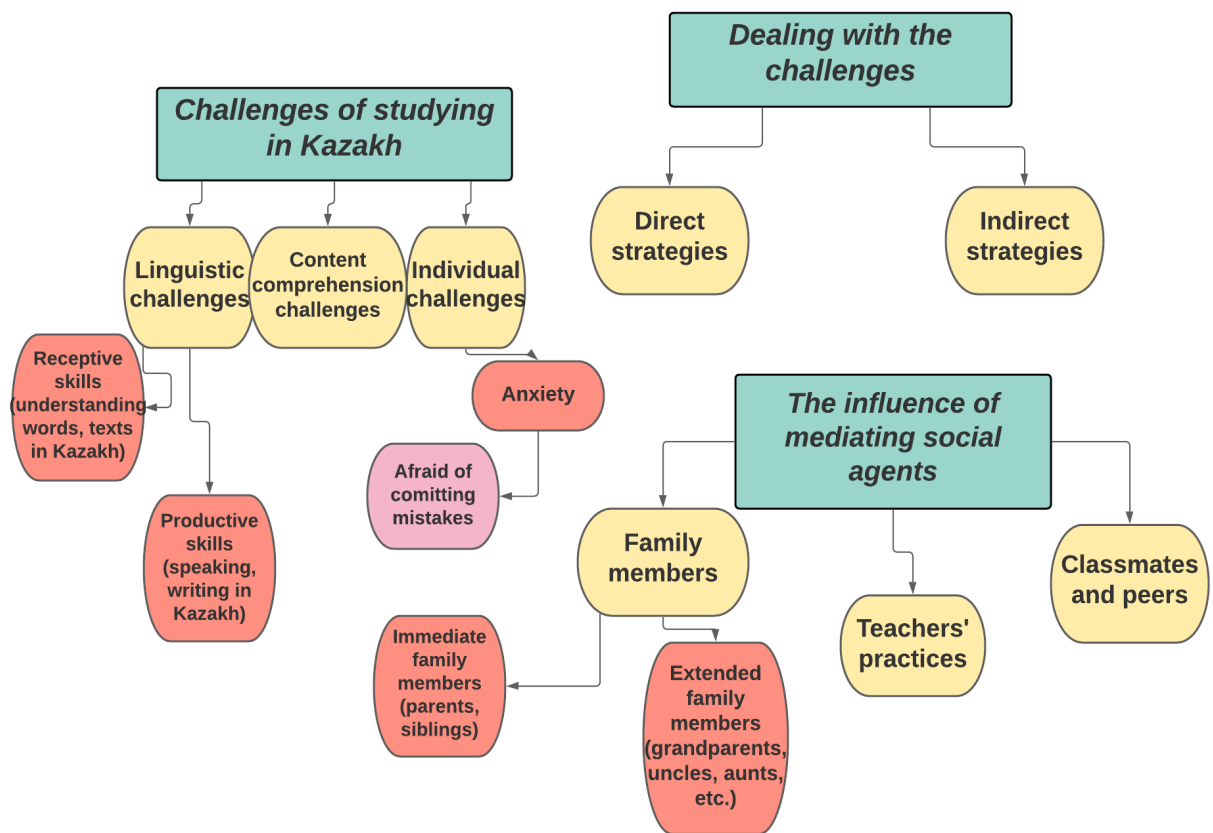
Data Analysis

In order to analyze the data obtained from the essays and interviews, Braun and Clarke’s (2006, 2013) six steps of conducting thematic analysis were used in this research. Thematic analysis is “a method for identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns of meanings (themes) within qualitative data” (Terry et al., 2017, p. 297). It does not only organize the data set but also helps to interpret different aspects of the research in detail (Boyatzis, 1998). As for the “theme” – it can be described as the representation of important data that are associated with patterned answers or meanings related to the particular research topic (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thus, the data obtained from the participants were analyzed according to the following phases of thematic analysis.

Firstly, in order to get familiar with the data, the quality of the audio recordings of interviews was carefully checked by the researcher by listening to them because recordings give the opportunity to review the data repeatedly. The researcher read and reread the transcripts “actively, analytically, and critically” by taking into account the participants’ explicit and hidden meanings (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 205). After the process of familiarization, the data were coded to generate initial codes (e.g., “language use at home”, “positive experience of learning Kazakh”, “support from immediate family members”, “anxiety during lessons”) in relation to the focus of the study inquiry (for more elaboration about the initial codes in this study, see Appendix B). For this purpose, a selected reading approach (Van Manen, 2017) was used as the researcher read the transcripts, and also highlighted the statements that seemed to capture the influences of host of contextual realities on the participants’ strategy use. In order to enhance the reliability of the study, a “coder reliability check” was used by sending the initial codes to the researcher’s thesis supervisor after obtaining the participants’ permission. After several revisions, and on the basis of the initial codes the main themes appeared and were reclassified into sub-themes (see figure 2). The main three themes that emerged after the data analysis were: “the influence of mediating social agents”, “challenges of studying in the Kazakh language”, and “dealing with the challenges”.

Figure 2

Thematic Map



Source: The final thematic map derived from students' data and compiled by the researcher

Ethical Considerations

There are issues regarding ethics that a researcher can face while conducting a study (Dörnyei, 2007). Especially in Central Asian countries, including Kazakhstan, different ethical challenges such as forcing people to participate in research, can be seen as the traces of the bureaucracy of the Soviet era that still exist today (Jonbekova, 2018). Therefore, several ethical considerations that have been taken to ensure the validity and reliability of this study are presented further.

As this research included the participants who are children of the eighth grade under the age of 18, the researcher paid particular attention to the issues of anonymity and confidentiality. From the beginning, the issues of anonymity and confidentiality were

explained to the participants, to ensure that they are not afraid of their answers being shared with the teachers. Also, the participants' rights, such as participation on a voluntary basis, the omission of some questions if requested, withdrawal from participation in the research at any moment, were listed in the consent form, introduced to their parents, and then explained orally to participants before interviews. Thus, informed consent was sought from all participants in the study. The consent forms include "voluntarism, full information and comprehension" (Cohen et al., 2000, p. 51) and ensure "clarity of purpose" and "honesty" (Lindsay, 2010, p. 118). Lindsay (2010) emphasizes that a researcher needs to disentangle issues of access from those of consent, by being considerate to "levels of consent" (p. 118). In the present project, accessing schools through the gatekeepers did not guarantee the participants' consent. As such, it was necessary to gain permission from class teachers to collect the data from their students.

Moreover, according to Roberts and Priest (2010), "researchers must undertake to keep all information confidential and secure, and to inform participants where and how it will be stored, who will have access to it and how it will be used" (p. 116). As a result, the participants were repeatedly told that their participation is anonymous and their names will be substituted with pseudonyms. In addition, the researcher stored any personal data such as signed informed consent forms, pupils' names, the name of the school, and any personal identifying details separately in her personal laptop, protected with the password. The name of the school's area was also removed. Notably, the benefits of this study to participants and to actors in formal settings were fully explained.

Pitts and Miller-Day (2007) suggest that rapport can be increased or more easily developed by giving participants "more respect, power, and control" (p. 181). Thus, the researcher intended to minimize the impact of the power relations on the participants'

responses by disclosing some of her learning experiences, and applauding their willingness to share their learning experiences and reflections.

Conclusion

This chapter presented the description of the methodology of this study by providing information about the research design, the research site and sample, data collection instruments and procedures, data analysis, and ethical considerations of this research. More specifically, this study adopted an instrumental multiple case study method in which eight Russian-dominant Kazakh students were chosen as participants according to homogeneous sampling. Narrative writing and semi-structured interviews were used as data collection instruments to obtain data from the participants. The next chapter will provide a description of the main findings of this study.

Chapter 4: Findings

Introduction

Chapter 3 focused on data collection methods (i.e., narrative writing and individual interviews), and the process of data analysis deployed in this research. It also described the selection of the participants and site. The qualitative data were analyzed following Clark and Braun's (2006, 2013) guidelines of thematic analysis. The features of each stage of the data analysis and the ethical consideration of this study were explained in Chapter 3 as well. This chapter presents findings of the research which were obtained from eight participants of the eighth grade at a mainstream school in Nur-Sultan. As previously stated, the current research is guided by the following research questions that are going to be addressed in this chapter:

1. What challenges did sampled participants face in studying in a Kazakh-medium school?
2. What contextual factors influenced the participants' Kazakh language learning experiences?
3. How did they deal with these challenges (i.e., their strategy uses)?

The next section will present summaries of the participants' biographical accounts based on their narrative essays. Subsequently, the findings of the participants' challenges of studying in the Kazakh-medium school, and their uses of language learning strategies (LLSs) will be described according to the resultant themes and sub-themes that emerged after data analysis (see Figure 1 for the thematic map in Chapter 3, page 43). These themes are "the influence of mediating social agents", "challenges of studying in Kazakh", and "dealing with the challenges".

Biographical Vignettes of the Research Participants

This section displays the eight participants' biographical vignettes based on their written accounts of their experience of both learning the Kazakh language and studying in it.

Almira

Almira was born in 2006 in the capital of Kazakhstan, Nur-Sultan. She grew up with an older sister and two younger brother and sister. Her mother was from Nur-Sultan and worked as an accountant, whereas her father was from Aktobe, West Kazakhstan region and worked as a driver. Almira's family were capable of speaking both Kazakh and Russian. Her father sometimes used Kazakh because he studied in a Kazakh-medium school in Aktobe. However, as her mother studied in Russian as a medium of instruction, both at school and a university, all members of her family tended to use mostly Russian in their daily communication. Almira mentioned that her language choice during school lessons essentially relied on the language used by her class teachers. As most teachers were strict, students were obliged to speak Kazakh only, whereas a few others allowed their students to speak Russian inside the classroom. Almira described how she sometimes had difficulty in understanding her teachers' explanations of the taught subjects and retelling the materials.

Askar

Askar was born in 2006 in Pavlodar, which is located in North Kazakhstan, but his parents were born in Almaty. He grew up with his two sisters. His father was a lawyer, while his mother did not work. Askar's family tended to use the Russian language more than Kazakh. Askar indicated that he preferred to use Russian and English both inside and outside the classroom, as he loved the English language because he have been studying it since he was seven years old. He enjoyed studying through the medium of Kazakh;

nevertheless, he found the Kazakh language and literature classes as the most challenging ones, as they included many unfamiliar Kazakh vocabulary words and some idioms.

Alikhan

Alikhan and his family were from Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan. He was born in 2006 and grew up with his little brother. His father worked at a hospital and a bank, whereas his mother was a housewife. He mostly used Russian with his family members, but they sometimes used Kazakh too. During lessons with his classmates, Alikhan essentially used the Kazakh language but outside the classroom, he communicated with his other friends in Russian. Although he felt happy in studying through the medium of the Kazakh language and used it very well, he sometimes faced difficulty in understanding what his teachers explained, or even what was written in the textbooks. In these cases, he tended to use some social strategies by soliciting assistance from his mainstream teachers and classmates by asking them "what is the meaning of this word?", or "what is the teacher talking about?".

Damir

Damir was born in 2005. He was from Nur-Sultan city but his father and mother were born and raised in Temirtau, the city which is located in Central Kazakhstan near Karagandy. His mother was a cosmetologist, and his father worked in a hospital. Damir and his parents used the Russian language for daily communication. Even though Damir used Kazakh in the lessons, he preferred to use Russian outside the classroom because it was easier for him to communicate. He described his school education as "not difficult but not that easy". He attributed this to the difficulty of understanding some words and expressions in the Kazakh language. As a consequence, he stated that he did not know many words and their meanings in Kazakh. Similar to Alikhan, Damir tended to ask his teachers and classmates when he did not understand something in the lessons.

Karina

Karina was born in 2006 in Oskemen, East Kazakhstan, and lived there for six years. She grew up with her little brother. Her father was a business-man, and her mother worked as a chemistry teacher. Karina mentioned that Russian was the most used language among her family members. Moreover, she spoke Russian more than Kazakh at school. Nevertheless, Karina stated that she had to use Kazakh during the lessons. Even though her Kazakh language vocabulary was not extensive, Karina felt comfortable studying in the Kazakh-medium school because as she claimed, it would be an opportunity to expand her Kazakh language knowledge. Karina faced several problems while studying in Kazakh. For instance, she struggled with writing essays, attributable mainly to the insufficient Kazakh vocabulary knowledge. Consequently, she sometimes felt that her essays were similar to those written by Grade 4 student.

Nurlan

Nurlan was born in 2006 in Oskemen city. He grew up with his sister. Nurlan and his family members used almost only Russian at home. However, they occasionally used some Kazakh. He indicated that he preferred to use Russian for communicating with his classmates and friends outside the school because he had been speaking Russian since early childhood and hence felt more comfortable in using it than Kazakh. Nurlan perceived Kazakh as a difficult language, considering that it was hard for him to pronounce some Kazakh words. Moreover, he tended to think in Russian, and sometimes he forgot the Kazakh translation for different words.

Samira

Samira was born in 2006 in Almaty, but moved with her family to Nur-Sultan. She had five siblings. She tended to use Russian in her daily communications with her family members. Nevertheless, she sometimes used English with her elder sisters. None of them

spoke Kazakh at home. As she studied in the Kazakh school, she spoke Kazakh in the lessons. However, Samira preferred to speak Russian with some of her classmates outside the classroom. Sometimes she felt uncomfortable studying in the Kazakh-medium school because she simply could not understand the meaning of some Kazakh words. Samira stated that she always tried to overcome this problem by using some strategies, including the online translation apps.

Talgat

Talgat came from a village called Zhaksy, which is in Akmola oblast. He was born there in 2006, and at the age of two his family moved to Nur-Sultan. He grew up with two siblings. His father worked as a deputy director of the Botanical Garden in Nur-Sultan, while his mother worked as an accountant. His parents largely used Russian at home, and hence, he used Russian while communicating with his family members. Sometimes they used the Kazakh language. Although Talgat enjoyed speaking the Kazakh language both inside and outside the classroom, he stated that people around him used only Russian, thus, he had to speak Russian as well. Some Kazakh words, as Talgat mentioned, were difficult to pronounce. Hence, while it seemed convenient for Talgat to study in the Kazakh language, he sometimes mispronounced some Kazakh words or misunderstood their meanings. In this case, he often asked his teachers for an explanation.

Contextual Factors Affecting the Participants' Kazakh Language Learning

Experiences

This section aims to give more in-depth information about the focal role of a variety of contextual factors in mediating the participants' Kazakh language learning experiences and strategies choice and use. This is because this study is underpinned by a sociocultural perspective of language learning which underlines the pivotal influence of

both formal and informal social figures on individuals' language learning experiences and their strategy use and development (see Coyle, 2007; Gao, 2010).

The Influence of Mediating Social Agents

While exploring the data related to the influence of particular groups of individuals on the participants' challenges of studying in Kazakh as a medium of instruction (KMI), and their Kazakh learning strategies, three main types of social agents were identified as follows: *family members*, *mainstream teachers*, and *peers*.

Family Members. The data analysis showed that the eight participants' language use at home was largely connected to their parents' linguistic backgrounds. More specifically, all participants preferred to use the Russian language at home when speaking with their parents and siblings. This point can be exemplified in Extracts 1 and 2:

Extract 1:

At home we speak Russian and Kazakh, but more Russian. Since childhood, I have been speaking Russian with my parents (Alikhan, November 3, 2020).

Extract 2:

We speak Russian at home; none of my family members use Kazakh. I only use Kazakh at school (Samira, November 3, 2020).

Thus, one of the challenges that the participants faced was related to the lack of practicing the Kazakh language outside the classroom. That is, despite studying in the Kazakh-medium school, the participants communicated almost only in Russian at home. Talgat, for instance, reported that the reason for using only Russian at home was due to his parents' insufficient knowledge of the Kazakh language:

Extract 3:

My parents do not know Kazakh well. Therefore, they speak Russian. I think this is because there were no Kazakh schools in their villages (Talgat, November 2, 2020).

As shown in the above extract, the language choice of the participants' parents was largely dependent on their education. As described in Chapter 2, there was a massive language shift from Kazakh to Russian during the Soviet times when Kazakh people wanted their children to be educated in Russian in order to fit in to the Soviet society and obtain a higher social status (Smagulova, 2021). In addition, since 1970, there has been a lack of Kazakh-medium schools, especially in Kazakh villages; therefore, Kazakh people had no choice but to study in Russian (Reagan, 2019).

The data analysis of the interview data revealed that all participants excluding Damir mentioned specific occasions (e.g., meeting their grandparents or speaking to guests), where they tended to use the Kazakh language. The following extracts from the interview transcripts of Askar and Nurlan explicate this idea:

Extract 4:

When we have older guests in our house, we try to speak Kazakh. Our parents want us to speak Kazakh with our grandparents, and other relatives who are older (Askar, November 2, 2020).

Extract 5:

We have been used to speak only Russian since childhood. But with my grandfather and grandmother, we sometimes speak Kazakh or with other elderly relatives (Nurlan, November 2, 2020).

The picture that emerges from the above extracts portrays the positive involvement of some extended family members by acting as an enabling language resource in the life of some participants. The same extracts also displayed how the participants exercised their own agency (i.e., the capacity to act) by investing the opportunities offered to them and using Kazakh with some relatives (i.e., social strategies) (see Norton & Toohey, 2001). Compared with the participants' parents, it can also be concluded that the majority of people of the older generation in Kazakhstan, - due to their education and social

background, - tended to speak Kazakh more than the generation of the participants' parents. This finding may be ascribed to the fact that the older generation witnessed the implementation of "korenizatsiya" (indigenization) reform in the 1930s and 1950s, under which the Kazakh language was promoted among the indigenous Kazakh population (Smaguova, 2016). Therefore, unlike the participants' parents who became bilingual or Russian-dominant, the participants' grandparents and other elderlies had an opportunity to study in Kazakh-medium schools, and to learn the Kazakh language.

The described connections were important to identify the participants' backgrounds and reasons for Russian and Kazakh language use at home. Thus, there was somehow a neutral to negative influence of the immediate family members on the participants' exposure to the Kazakh language. This is because the parents themselves were not proficient in Kazakh and hence their direct involvement in their children's Kazakh language learning and strategy uses was confined to sending them to the Kazakh-medium school and sometimes giving some help to their children while completing their homework.

Despite the tendency of the parents of the participants to speak Russian with their children at home, all of them seemed eager to help the participants do their homework at the beginning of their studying. In echoing this idea, Almira and Askar declared that:

Extract 6:

My parents helped me with my homework, especially in primary school... and even now they help sometimes (Almira, November 2, 2020).

Extract 7:

As a child, my mother helped me to learn Kazakh poems, for example. Now my older sister helps me to write the essays, letters and some words in Kazakh (Askar, November 2, 2020).

The above extracts indicate that although the parents of these two participants (Almira, Askar) tended to speak almost only Russian at home, they mediated some cognitive strategies to their children by helping them with homework in the Kazakh language.

The interview data also showed that three participants (Alikhan, Karina, Nurlan) exercised their agentive power by seeking support from their extended family members such as grandparents, uncles, and aunts. The following extracts exemplify this point:

Extract 8:

I always asked my grandparents to explain to me the Kazakh literature proverbs and sayings which include a hidden meaning. At school, my teachers sometimes asked us to reveal the meaning of these proverbs (Alikhan, November 3, 2020).

Extract 9:

When I don't understand words in Kazakh, I usually ask my grandparents. They explain these words to me in Russian, and sometimes we read Kazakh stories together. They explain the meaning of some difficult words to me, in Russian or Kazakh. They speak Kazakh better than my parents (Nurlan, November 2, 2020).

The data analysis also revealed that although the decision of sending the participants to the Kazakh-medium school was taken by the parents themselves, all participants had a positive attitude towards studying at this school. This idea was aptly described in the following interview extracts:

Extract 11:

I like to study in Kazakh, although it's a little difficult. But if I studied in Russian, I would only speak Russian and would forget the Kazakh language (Almira, November 2, 2020).

Extract 12:

I'm happy to study at my current school. Kazakh is my mother tongue. Although I face some difficulties, this is normal. I feel I can help my parents in Kazakh. For example, when we have guests, my parents do not know how to say toasts in Kazakh, but I can. They are proud of me. If I had studied at a Russian school, I would not have known my native language (Alikhan, November 3, 2020).

Thus, despite the fact that the first choice was made by the participants' parents, the participants developed their own identities as Kazakh speakers. Consequently, although they might begin to learn the Kazakh language under the influence of their parents, they soon started to invest in Kazakh language learning as they started to perceive themselves as full members of the Kazakh society who can communicate in the Kazakh language.

Teachers' Practices. The findings of the study revealed how the participants' efforts to learn and use Kazakh were considerably coordinated by their teachers in the educational context. That is, the data show that the engagement of mainstream teachers in mediating the participants' investment in learning Kazakh occurred through supporting or limiting the participants' language beliefs and motivations and/or through influencing them to deploy specific LLSs. For instance, when the participants were asked about the types of support they needed from their mainstream teachers, Almira, for instance, stated that she tended to ask the translation or definition of some Kazakh words from her Kazakh language teacher (i.e., cognitive and social strategies); however, Almira on occasion felt uncomfortable, due to the teachers' negative reaction when she was asked about the same point several times:

Extract 13:

I can ask my teachers if something is not clear. However, some teachers lost their temper when they were asked to explain the same idea repeatedly. Sometimes I felt a bit scared that the teacher may swear because she had already explained that idea several times. Therefore, I sometimes think twice before asking my teachers about things I did not fully understand inside the classroom (Almira, November 2, 2020).

In this sense, due to some teachers' negative reaction to students' repetitive questions, Almira became on numerous occasions hesitant to ask about the points she did not fully understand (see Henry, 2014). Interestingly, two participants (Almira, Nurlan) described

their teachers' intolerance towards using other languages except for Kazakh during Kazakh language lessons:

Extract 14:

I would like our teachers to understand us more. For example, if the teacher hears us speaking Russian, I don't know what will happen to us ... she is very strict about using only Kazakh inside the classroom (Almira, November 2, 2020).

Thus, translanguaging practices were not accepted by the teacher during Kazakh language classes. More specifically, according to San Isidro and Lasagabaster (2019), translanguaging refers to both teachers' and students' systematic interchange and use of various languages. It is also associated with an interaction of multilingual learners during which their linguistic practices are evident (García & Wei, 2014).

Importantly, this extract recalls Norton's (2014) poststructuralist view of motivation and resistance in the language classroom, whereby an individual may be motivated and enthusiastic to learn a specific language, but if the language practices of the classroom make that individual unhappy or dissatisfied, they may resist participating in classroom activities, or gradually become disruptive. Thus, the teacher's negative attitude towards speaking in other languages than Kazakh could affect the Russian-dominant students' motivation to be involved during Kazakh language classes, along with using effective strategies.

Conversely, in Nurlan's case, he reported that his teacher's strictness and intolerance towards the usage of the Russian language in the lessons made him recognize the importance of using Kazakh more frequently, in order to please his teacher and avoid losing some marks. This was one of the punishments used by his teacher for students using Russian inside the classroom. Extract 15 clearly explains this point.

Extract 15:

In general, we have to speak only Kazakh with our teachers at school, since we are studying in Kazakh. In our Kazakh language lessons, the teacher scolds us if she hears anyone uses Russian with his classmates (Nurlan, November 2, 2020).

Therefore, if for Almira and the other two participants (Askar, Alikhan), the teacher's strictness was a reason for being demotivated to participate in the lessons, for Nurlan it was a reason for starting to use Kazakh during lessons more than Russian.

Peers' Influence. All participants excluding Askar stated that they tended to resort to their classmates to explain unfamiliar Kazakh words or sentences. Extract 16 exemplifies this point.

Extract 16:

I often do not understand what I am reading on Kazakh literature or history. I have to ask my classmates to explain something to me (Damir, November 3, 2020).

As for Talgat, he reported that his outdoor friends have been speaking the Kazakh language as well as his school friends, therefore, he enjoyed speaking Kazakh:

Extract 17:

Well, all my outdoor friends spoke Kazakh. And now they also speak Kazakh. And at the school, my friends and I speak Kazakh mostly (Talgat, November 2, 2020).

It seems that in order to be accepted by peers in the yard, Talgat started to communicate in Kazakh with them, although his parents used only Russian at home. Thus, Talgat invested in his language learning effort by capitalizing on the benefits of having friends who were fluent in Kazakh. Consequently, it was not difficult for Talgat to befriend Kazakh-speaking classmates. By contrast, Nurlan reported that he communicated with Russian-dominant classmates as it was more suitable for him:

Extract 18:

We have something to discuss, we understand each other [with Russian-speaking classmates]. Of course, I communicate with everyone in the classroom, but with my

friends more, because it is more convenient for us to speak Russian (Nurlan, November 2, 2020).

It can be considered as a negative involvement of Russian-dominant classmates because despite studying in the Kazakh-medium school, Nurlan did not invest in speaking Kazakh with his peers, and communicated predominantly with those who mostly used Russian as it was more convenient for him.

Another participant (Alikhan) reported a negative experience connected with his classmates during lessons:

Extract 19:

And there were also situations when my classmates made jokes about my accent. Then the teacher noticed and said that I have a Russian accent (Alikhan, November 3, 2020).

In other words, there was a negative environment in a classroom that might have demotivated Alikhan to speak in front of a class because of the accent issues.

Challenges of Studying in Kazakh

The dominance of the Russian language over Kazakh in the participants' lives resulted in the insufficient acquisition of the Kazakh language in childhood, thus, causing different challenges of studying in the Kazakh language. The data analysis of this study showed that the participants' challenges could be classified into linguistic, content comprehension, and individual.

Linguistic Challenges

Linguistic challenges encountered by the participants while studying in the Kazakh language played a significant role in the development of the participants' strategies of learning the Kazakh language and impacted the formation of other types of challenges (academic, individual). Based on the data analysis, two main types of linguistic challenges

were identified; namely, the challenges connected to the receptive and productive skills of the participants.

Receptive Skills. One interesting finding was that the majority of the participants (five out of eight) reported that Kazakh language and literature classes were the most difficult to study. They ascribed this finding to the difficulty they encountered in understanding the meanings of academic or literary Kazakh words. Therefore, they struggled with reading the pieces of literature in the Kazakh language, and listening to the teacher's explanations, as exemplified in the following interview extract:

Extract 20:

We need to read everything in Kazakh. For example, when the teacher reads some kind of verse, or poetry, or a summary of the literature, there are several words that I do not understand (Almira, November 2, 2020).

Another participant, Nurlan, stated that his understanding of the Kazakh literature was insufficient because of difficult Kazakh literary words:

Extract 21:

When I read Kazakh literature, I do not understand everything. This is because we are asked to read a lot of different stories but they are hard written, and I do not understand some literary words. Then, when we need to answer questions and retell literature, I usually remain silent (Nurlan, November 2, 2020).

Therefore, because of the challenge of understanding Kazakh literature and literary words, Nurlan chose to be silent during classroom discussions led by the teacher. Thus, the challenges with the receptive skills of Nurlan might negatively influence the development of his productive skills, namely, speaking.

Productive Skills. Not only were Nurlan's productive skills affected by his insufficient knowledge of Kazakh words and incomplete understanding of literary texts,

but also, other participants (Almira, Alikhan, Damir, Karina) reported to have problems with writing:

Extract 22:

Writing an essay in Kazakh is not easy. This is because I sometimes find a difficulty in finding the appropriate words in Kazakh while writing my essays. I often ask my classmates for help (Almira, November 2, 2020).

Echoing this point, Alikhan also struggled to write essays in the Kazakh language because of his insufficient knowledge of special vocabulary:

Extract 23:

I find it difficult to write essays in Kazakh because there you need to use all sorts of literary words, which I do not know, and I still need to write a lot, five or six pages, but I can't write that much (Alikhan, November 3, 2020).

Content Comprehension Challenges

Due to the linguistic challenges, especially problems with understanding the meaning of some Kazakh literary words and terms, three participants (Alikhan, Damir, Karina, Samira) described the challenges of content comprehension of different subjects, as shown in the following extracts:

Extract 24:

For all subjects especially in biology, geography, physics, I have to read 10 times in order to understand something. And so... you have to read many times to be able to retell the material (Karina, November 3, 2020).

Damir and Samira also reported that it was difficult for them to study geometry, chemistry, geography, and physics, as they had to comprehend a large amount of information including complex terms in the Kazakh language. For example, Samira immediately reported that it would be much easier to study geography, or physics in Russian as there would be no need to repeatedly read the material:

Extract 25:

Of course, it is easier to read everything in Russian because you do not need to translate anything or memorize. You can just read once [in Russian] and remember everything (Samira, November 3, 2020).

The analysis of the interview data also revealed that one participant, Alikhan, declared that despite algebra being his favorite subject in primary school, he did not comprehend it due to his poor Kazakh language knowledge:

Extract 26:

I like algebra, but in primary school I didn't quite understand it because I didn't know Kazakh well, especially when everything was explained in Kazakh (Alikhan, November 3, 2020).

Alikhan was willing to comprehend its content because of his growing interest in algebra, and as he has been studying algebra in Kazakh, he eventually started to invest in his Kazakh language learning:

Extract 27:

Due to I liked solving mathematical problems, I wanted to know and understand more, so I began to look at the Kazakh language differently. I needed the Kazakh language to improve my knowledge in other subjects. Therefore, I began to do the tasks which were given to us by the teacher of the Kazakh language and literature very carefully (Alikhan, November 3, 2020).

Individual Challenges

In addition to the challenges related to insufficient language knowledge, and content comprehension, three participants (Karina, Nurlan, Samira) referred to individual challenges such as anxiety, which affected their classroom performance. For instance, Karina stated that after teachers' questions, she sometimes felt insecure about her answers, and it directly influenced the quality of her response:

Extract 28:

When a teacher asks something, I sometimes get worried and don't know how to answer; my tongue starts to get tangled, or it's hard to pronounce the words (Karina, November 3, 2020).

Nurlan and Samira referred to their negative attitude towards participating in classroom discussions, as both of them were afraid of recalling Kazakh words and not being able to finish sentences while answering a teacher's questions. Therefore, although the teacher might think that Nurlan was not prepared for the lesson, he preferred to stay silent in order not to experience anxiety caused by his insufficient Kazakh vocabulary range when participating in classroom discussions. As for Samira, even her preference of subjects showed that she enjoyed classes in which speaking was not considered to be essential (algebra, geometry). Thus, she stated that she did not like speaking, as she tended to stutter over some Kazakh words, or forget them at all:

Extract 29:

Sometimes they [teachers] think that I do not answer because I am not prepared for lessons, but I prepare for lessons. I'm just afraid that I won't be able to give full answers, or there won't be enough words (Nurlan, 2 November, 2020).

Dealing with the Challenges: Participants' Kazakh Learning Strategy Use

This section presents the findings of the participants' strategies of dealing with the challenges of studying in the Kazakh language. As described in Chapter 2 on page 23, the participants' strategy uses were analyzed according to Oxford's (1990) classification of LLSs divided into direct and indirect ones. According to Oxford (1990), direct strategies involve mental processing, therefore, they can be classified as “memory strategies”, “cognitive strategies”, and “compensation strategies”. As for indirect strategies, they are divided into “metacognitive”, “affective”, and “social” strategies. Table 2 presents the strategies that were used by the participants while studying at the Kazakh-medium school,

followed by a contextualized description of their Kazakh learning strategies with reference to the participants' interview data.

Table 2

The Participants' Use of Kazakh Language Learning Strategies

Classification of strategies	Types of strategies	Strategies used by the participants	Participants
Direct strategies	Memory	Placing new words into a context	Damir
	Cognitive	Memorizing texts and vocabulary	Almira, Askar, and Alikhan
		Translating and writing down unfamiliar Kazakh words	Almira, Askar, Alikhan, Damir, Karina, Nurlan, and Samira
		Reading books in the Kazakh language	Almira, Askar, Alikhan, Damir, Karina, Samira, and Talgat
Indirect strategies	Compensation	Practicing the language in natural, realistic settings	Askar, Alikhan, Karina, Nurlan, and Talgat
		Avoiding communication during lessons	Damir, Nurlan
	Metacognitive	Self-evaluation	Almira, Askar, Alikhan, Damir, Karina, and Samira
	Affective	Self-encouragement	Karina
		Social	Asking questions
Cooperation with others	Nurlan		

Source: compiled by the author

Direct Strategies

While exploring the data regarding the participants' strategy use, it was found that despite the lack of diversity, the participants employed all three types of direct strategies (memory, cognitive, compensation) which will be described further.

Memory Strategies. These types of strategies can help learners to acquire and store the material, and then use it when communication is required (Oxford, 2017). The data analysis of this study found that only one participant, Damir, reported about his experience of using memory strategies, as shown in Extract 30.

Extract 30:

I try to memorize different words that I did not know before. I also try to use them immediately when I answer in class... I also try to use them when I talk to my grandparents (Damir, November 3, 2020).

This extract exemplifies how Damir exercised his agency and employed suitable strategies (such as cognitive and metacognitive strategies) in order to memorize new Kazakh words and use them in a context while communicating with different social agents inside and outside the classroom in order to remember them. Therefore, he successfully created mental linkages, and adopted one of the memory strategies types, which is known as "placing new words in a context".

Cognitive Strategies. These strategies focus on manipulating and mastering the language, including different types such as repeating, practicing, translating, and taking notes (Oxford, 2017). In the present study, the participants' interview transcripts showed that all of them deployed cognitive strategies, especially memorizing, translating, and writing down new Kazakh words while studying through the medium of Kazakh. This can be seen in the following extracts:

Extract 31:

Our reading texts include several new words. If I didn't catch the meaning of some words from my teacher or forgot to ask my classmates about them, I sometimes look up unfamiliar vocabulary on the Internet. After that, I try to jot the new words down on my notebook to memorize them (Almira, November, 2, 2020).

Extract 32:

I usually write down unfamiliar words, then I translate them after I looked them up from the Internet at home. I also memorize texts by heart, because it is difficult to retell the material in my own words (Alikhan, November 3, 2020).

As is evident from these extracts, the participants adopted some cognitive strategies – repeating new vocabulary orally many times and then jotting it down in a notebook, memorizing some texts by heart and consulting an online dictionary and using the translated equivalent. These strategies were used mainly to understand the meaning of words and expressions, and to expand their vocabulary in the Kazakh language.

The interview data also suggest that all participants tried to practice the Kazakh language naturalistically, which means that they sought opportunities to communicate in Kazakh with their peers (i.e., social strategies), or purposefully read extracurricular Kazakh literature and books in order to improve the level of their Kazakh language skills. Extracts 33 and 34 exemplify this point.

Extract 33:

My friends and I sometimes try to speak Kazakh in order to practice and speak more fluently. Also, I read in Kazakh to build a vocabulary...This is because when I write, I sometimes feel I do not know enough Kazakh words (Karina, November 3, 2020).

Extract 34:

I try to read different books in Kazakh and write down unknown words to learn their translation (Askar, November 3, 2020).

Also, the participants highlighted the mediating role of objects which aided their Kazakh language learning. The use of the internet played a crucial role in enhancing the participants' use of cognitive strategies, such as translation. In other words, seven out of eight participants reported that they always translated Kazakh words by using Internet online translation apps:

Extract 35:

So ... what do I do ... well, I try to learn different words that I don't know. I search for their meanings through online translation apps (Damir, November 3, 2020).

Extract 36:

Because when I read, I don't understand anything, and I have to photograph the entire page in order to translate through an online translator. Then I read the translation and use my own words during lessons (Karina, November 3, 2020).

Thus, if Damir used online translators in order to translate particular Kazakh words that he did not understand, Karina used it to understand the meaning of the whole text as the technology allowed her to download the photo of the page and translate what was written in it through the app. Therefore, the cognitive strategy use of the participants was enhanced and mediated by the Internet.

Moreover, books can also be considered as objects that mediated the strategy use of the participants, as all of them stated that they read Kazakh books to learn new words, and expand their overall knowledge of the Kazakh language. However, Talgat reported that he stopped reading books in Kazakh and preferred Russian ones, as there was a great variety of literature in Russian that seemed to be more interesting:

Extract 37:

There are few books in Kazakh, but many interesting ones in Russian. For example, “fantasy”, and other different books (Talgat, November 2, 2020).

Compensation Strategies. In order to overcome limitations in speaking, two participants, Damir and Nurlan, used compensation strategies to help them deal with insufficient knowledge of vocabulary, or grammar by avoiding communication on the lessons:

Extract 39:

I usually find it difficult to answer in the classroom because my vocabulary is not sufficient. I have to learn everything, although some guys can just read once and

understand everything. Sometimes I forget to learn the material, and I can't speak in my own words and sometimes I just remain silent (Damir, November 3, 2020).

Indirect Strategies

The data analysis showed that the participants tended to use on occasion metacognitive and social strategies that were not necessarily connected to language. As for affective strategies, which are connected to dealing with attitudes and emotions by lowering the level of anxiety, self-encouragement, or controlling feelings, no one referred to such practices during their interviews.

Affective Strategies. Affective factors play an important role in language learning and with the help of affective strategies learners can gain control over their emotions, attitudes, and motivations (Oxford, 1990). For instance, by combining affective (self-encouragement), and social (collaborating with peers) strategies, one of the participants (Karina) reported about her progress in language learning:

Extract 40:

In order not to worry, I practice more, I speak Kazakh with friends. Even when I make mistakes, it is useful for me. Because I'm starting to learn harder (Karina, November 3, 2020).

Metacognitive Strategies. Metacognitive strategies allow learners to control and organize their own learning process (Oxford, 1990). Thus, by analyzing the answers of the participants, it was found that the majority (6 out of 8) were able to self-monitor their learning by taking into consideration and working on their mistakes, and self-evaluating the overall process of their Kazakh language improvement:

Extract 41:

Now I like the Kazakh language and I already speak better because I study in Kazakh. But it can be difficult, because sometimes I don't understand some words (Almira, November 2, 2020).

Social Strategies. As it was described earlier in this chapter, the practices of the participants' social agents significantly influenced their learning process. Therefore, social strategies can be perceived as strategies that were widely used by the participants, as they included asking questions and cooperating with peers and other individuals while learning the language. For example, Almira stated that she asked questions from her teachers and classmates to clarify things she did not understand:

Extract 42:

Sometimes I ask my classmates to help explain something if I don't understand (Almira, November 2, 2020).

Similarly, Askar and Alikhan tended to ask teachers and classmates to explain or clarify something in order to build an understanding of the learning material.

Conclusion

This chapter illustrated the main findings related to the challenges and strategy use of Russian-dominant students who study in a Kazakh-medium school. Firstly, biographical vignettes of eight research participants were presented. Next, the findings were presented according to three themes that emerged after data analysis, namely, "the influence of mediating social agents", "challenges of studying in Kazakh" and "dealing with the challenges". The data were analyzed from a sociocultural perspective, which allowed the researcher to present the findings in relation to the notions of social agency, and investment. It was found out that despite the participants' parents acting as powerful figures by deciding to send their children to the Kazakh-medium school, the participants' identities as Kazakh speakers evolved and as a result, they developed their own principles and ideologies of studying in KMI, and invested in Kazakh language learning as responsible members of the Kazakh speaking society. Nevertheless, they faced challenges caused by their insufficient Kazakh language knowledge during their education. More

specifically, the participants experienced linguistic, content comprehension, and individual challenges while studying in the Kazakh-medium school.

However, the participants referred to different strategies which contributed to their Kazakh language learning. These strategies were illustrated according to Oxford's (1990) classification of direct and indirect LLSs. Moreover, the internet was reported to be useful in enhancing the participants' use of cognitive strategies as they were using online apps to translate unfamiliar Kazakh words and learn their meanings. Other materials such as books also helped the participants to expand their vocabulary range in the Kazakh language. The presented findings will be delineated according to the theoretical framework and empirical studies in the next chapter.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This chapter focuses on the discussion of the findings that were presented in Chapter 4 and emerged from two qualitative research methods, namely, narrative writing and semi-structured online interviews. This chapter also discusses the findings of the current research guided by sociocultural language learning perspectives in relation to the existing literature on the challenges of studying in a second language, language learning strategies (LLSs), and investment in language learning. As repeatedly mentioned, this research study attempted to investigate the challenges encountered by eighth grade Russian-dominant Kazakh students in studying in a Kazakh-medium school of Nur-Sultan, unraveling the factors that caused these challenges, and the diverse strategies used by the participants to overcome their linguistic and academic challenges. The following research questions were addressed in the previous chapter and will be discussed in this chapter with reference to Darwin and Norton's (2015) model of investment adopted in this study:

1. What challenges did sampled participants face in studying in a Kazakh-medium school?
2. What contextual factors influenced the participants' Kazakh language learning experiences?
3. How did they deal with these challenges (i.e., their strategy uses)?

Hence, this chapter is divided into three sections which emerged according to the research questions mentioned above.

Revisiting the Conceptual Framework Adopted in this Study

To capture the participants' language learning experiences and situated and actual uses of LLSs, the present study embraced a sociocultural perspective on language learning that uncovers how individuals' LLS uses are the outcome of ongoing interaction between language learners themselves and a host of contextual realities, including the mediating

roles of family, teachers, and peers, as well as availability of language learning resources. Therefore, instead of implementing quantitative data collection methods such as questionnaires and surveys, qualitative methods such as one-on-one semi-structured online interviews and narrative writing were deployed in this study to explore the participants' dynamic experiences, challenges, and strategies in Kazakh language learning and development. With this in mind, this study utilized Darvin and Norton's (2015, 2021) model of investment which considers language learners as active agents with different identities that can be influenced by power or capital, ideologies, and finally, investment. Darvin and Norton (2018) point out that the term "investment" can be defined as "the commitment to the goals, practices, and identities that constitute the learning process and that are continually negotiated in different social relationships and structures of power" (p. 2). In this view, a language learner's investment or commitment to engage in learning or using a specific language can be noticeably influenced by language classroom methodology or parents' ways of involvement, for instance. More specifically, this model centers on the impact of economic and symbolic capital on students' identities, and allows to capture how participants invested in their Kazakh language learning by deploying (or even sometimes non-deploying) certain LLSs to achieve their learning goals and construct their desired identity (Darvin & Norton, 2016, 2021) (for more elaboration about this conceptual framework, see Chapter 2, pages 29-31). In the coming sections, this framework deployed in the current research study will be reflected on while discussing the research questions, along with the relevant literature.

RQ1: What Challenges did Sampled Participants Face in Studying in a Kazakh-Medium School?

The data analysis of this study showed that the eight participants had experienced different types of challenges while studying in the Kazakh language; namely, linguistic,

comprehension of content, and individual challenges that will be discussed in the coming sub-sections.

Linguistic Challenges

Gibbons (2015) points out that although the period for acquiring basic vocabulary in a second language varies from one to two years, education in a second language requires students to be aware of content-specific or academic vocabulary. Therefore, such students might struggle to understand the material in the second language. Three participants (Almira, Alikhan, Nurlan) reported that due to the insufficient knowledge of Kazakh vocabulary, they sometimes encountered difficulties with reading and cognitively processing information in the Kazakh language. To exemplify further, one participant, Almira, indicated that it was hard to listen to the teacher when she read literature in the Kazakh language in the classroom, since there were unfamiliar Kazakh words and their meanings were difficult to absorb. Although two participants (Alikhan, Nurlan) were often asked by their teacher to read and analyze Kazakh literature and other texts, this matter did not seem to contribute to the development of their knowledge as they simply did not understand many Kazakh literary words. This finding seems to align with Cummins's (2000) argument that students of another language need at least seven years to acquire the content-specific vocabulary which is required for developing academic language proficiency in a second language. However, when studying in a second language, language learning cannot be separated from the educational process itself; thus, students have to manage to combine their second language learning and acquisition of knowledge.

The current study also found that due to their insufficient understanding of Kazakh vocabulary, four participants (Almira, Alikhan, Damir, Karina) reported their difficulties with writing essays in the Kazakh language. This finding seems to recall that of Gumarova (2017) who studied the challenges of teaching geography in Kazakh as the second

language in two Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools (NIS). Gumarova (2017) found that some secondary school students with insufficient knowledge of the Kazakh language encountered problems in writing mini-essays in Kazakh, on the grounds that they spent a lot of time completing their assignments due to their deficient Kazakh language skills. However, this finding resulted from the data obtained from the teachers of those students. That is, Gumarova (2017) presented information from the teachers' perspective. The current study confirmed that it was difficult for Russian-dominant students to complete some of their written assignments in the Kazakh language attributable to their insufficient academic skills, namely inadequate knowledge of academic Kazakh vocabulary. More specifically, the participants' incomplete knowledge of different Kazakh words did not only hamper the development of their receptive skills (reading, listening) but also negatively influenced the development of their productive skills such as writing. For instance, it was problematic for some participants (Almira, Alikhan) to find appropriate Kazakh words that would transmit the correct meaning to the reader.

Content Comprehension Challenges

The current research revealed that the language proficiency of the participants directly influenced their cognitive abilities to comprehend content. For instance, one participant (Karina) declared that she had problems with understanding the content of some scientific subjects such as biology, geography, physics; therefore, she tended to read the material repetitively to be able to understand it and answer to the teachers' questions. Two other participants (Damir, Samira) shared their problems with acquiring a large amount of information while preparing for geometry, chemistry, physics, and geography. Also, they pointed out differences between studying in Kazakh and Russian by stating that it would have been easier to study these subjects in Russian due to their more proficient Russian language skills in comparison with Kazakh. Hence, this finding echoes Lasagabaster's

(2009) study, who revealed the association between the linguistic and content comprehension challenges of students studying in another language. In his study of the Basque Autonomous Community's in-service teachers' challenges whose home language was Spanish, Lasagabaster (2009) illustrated the teachers' problems of comprehending the content of history and philosophy because of a lack of the necessary language competence.

Individual Challenges

The results of this study indicated that along with linguistic and content comprehension challenges, some psychological challenges influenced the process of studying in the second language. In other words, feelings of anxiety and insecurity negatively impacted the way three participants (Karina, Nurlan, Samira) performed inside the classroom. For example, Karina sometimes was afraid of committing mistakes in front of her teacher and peers and her anxiety in turn constituted a difficulty in producing some Kazakh words. Another participant (Samira) was afraid of forgetting some Kazakh words while answering the teacher's questions because of her insufficient competence in the Kazakh language. Having this fear also influenced her subject preference; Samira felt more comfortable during some classes such as algebra and geometry, on the grounds that it was not necessary to speak in front of the classmates and teachers. Likewise, Nurlan and Karina expressed the same feelings of anxiety when participating in the classroom discussions led by the teacher. Consequently, Nurlan chose to remain silent during classroom discussions even if this behavior would impair the teacher's impression of him. With reference to the theoretical framework of this study which stressed the intricate relationship between investment and power, this finding seems to concur with Darwin and Norton's (2021) suggestion that "the relationship between language teachers and learners is unequal, and that teachers hold the power" (p. 1). Also, this finding related to the influence of teachers' practices is consistent with those of Tsui (1996), who studied reticence and anxiety in

second language learning by conducting a classroom action research project involving 38 English as a second language (ESL) teachers at the University of Hong Kong. Tsui (1996) revealed that according to the data obtained from the teachers, students' low English language competence caused the absence of responses during ESL classes. The teachers reported that the students were not able to clearly express their thoughts during classroom discussions, thus, they chose to remain silent. Another reason which was reported by Tsui's (1996) participants was the fear of committing mistakes. The teachers claimed that due to the lack of confidence and anxiety of committing mistakes while answering the questions of a teacher, students were afraid of speaking English during classes. They simply did not want to "lose face in front of their classmates if they give a wrong answer" (Tsui, 1996, p. 150). Although Tsui's (1996) study investigated anxiety in a second language from the teacher's perspective, the current study confirmed the association between the challenges of studying in a second language and language learning anxiety from the student's perspective.

RQ2: What Contextual Factors Influenced the Participants' Kazakh Language Learning Experiences?

This section discusses the contextual factors associated mainly with the influences of mediating social agents such as family members, teachers, and peers and their impact on the participants' Kazakh language learning experiences. The idea is essential to the current study guided by a sociocultural standpoint, which regards language learning as a social process mediated by teachers' efforts and "various social agents in contexts where language learning occurs" (Gao, 2006, p. 287). As it was described in Chapter 4, the participants originated from Russian-speaking Kazakh families who have been influenced by the linguistic situation that persisted during the Soviet era which included language shift from Kazakh to Russian, which resulted in the increase of bilingual Kazakh-Russian

community. This segment of population received their education in the Russian language; thus, they predominantly used Russian in their daily lives (Pavlenko, 2011). These events directly influenced the children who were born after independence (after 1991) whose parents to a certain extent experienced discrimination from the Soviet community in terms of nationality and language, and despite many efforts such as studying in Russian-medium schools were not accepted as legitimized speakers of the Russian language (Smagulova 2016; Reagan, 2019). Thus, these parents did not want the same path of rejection by a certain community on linguistic grounds to be replicated by their children; therefore, after the power relations between the Kazakh and Russian languages switched in favor of the Kazakh language, Russian-dominant Kazakh parents decided to provide their children with education in the Kazakh language. Another reason for such willingness to educate Kazakh children in the Kazakh language was connected to their strong cultural bonds (Amantay et al., 2017). This point is linked to Norton's (2021) concept of identity included in the theoretical work adopted in this research, or the term "history-in-person", meaning that people's perceptions of existence and behavior are "socially acquired" (Bourdieu, 1984, p.17). In other words, specific contexts shape people's ideologies and transmit them into their perceptions, and actions by creating dispositions (Darvin & Norton, 2018). Thus, it was the participants' parents' decision regarding the medium of instruction of their Russian-speaking children, which predetermined the possible challenges of studying in the Kazakh language.

Despite the parents' concerns, the participants entered an environment in which Kazakh speaking students and teachers held the privileged position of native speakers, whereas the Russian-dominant participants had to claim their worthiness or be recognized as the legitimate speakers of the language (Darvin & Norton, 2015). Consequently, the participants started to invest their language learning efforts. Some participants (Alikhan,

Karina, Nurlan) exercised their agentive power by seeking support from other legitimate speakers of the Kazakh language (extended family members) who had already positively influenced the participants' Kazakh language learning experiences by exposing them to the language in their childhoods. Learner agency, as Larsen-Freeman et al. (2021) describe, refers to "the feeling of ownership and sense of control that students have over their learning", and agentive learners are motivated not only to learn but also to take responsibility for managing the learning process (p. 6). It is worth noting that Darwin and Norton's (2015) model of investment adopted in this research did not disregard the importance of one's agency in language learning; rather it stressed that a language learner is likely to invest in language learning when they recognize that their efforts can lead to significant changes in terms of enhancing their cultural capital and social power. To clarify further, one participant (Alikhan) asked his grandparents to explain the meaning of some Kazakh proverbs and sayings, Nurlan received help in understanding unknown Kazakh words from his grandparents, and Karina tended to ask her aunts and uncles to translate Kazakh stories or explain them in a simpler version (i.e., metacognitive and social strategies). Other participants (Almira, Alikhan, Nurlan) exercised their learner agency by reflecting on their own language learning experiences and seeking help from their classmates who were more proficient in the Kazakh language. Thus, as Gao (2013) states, "reflexive/reflective thinking or thinking during action and post event in the learning process is indicative of agency as it speaks for individuals' intentionality" (p. 228). Moreover, four participants (Askar, Alikhan, Karina, and Talgat) invested their language learning efforts by practicing speaking Kazakh in natural settings with their peers. Nevertheless, Alikhan reported his negative experience of being discriminated against by his classmates because of his Russian accent. This finding seems to recall David and Norton's (2021) claim that when an individual becomes marginalized based on contextual

factors such as gender, race, ethnicity, or social status, they may not choose to invest in their language learning despite the possibility of having the motivation to learn it.

Likewise, Alikhan did not invest in the elimination of his accent; he reported that the accent disappeared by itself.

Another finding showed how the participants' efforts of both studying in Kazakh and learning it were determined by their teachers. For instance, some participants (Almira, Karina, Nurlan) stated that they were prohibited from using other languages than Kazakh during their Kazakh language as a subject classes and in their Kazakh literature classes as they referred to the strictness of their teacher, and her intolerance towards other languages, namely Russian during her lessons. Thus, this finding revealed that translanguaging was neither perceived as a teaching strategy nor even allowed in the classroom. By contrast, Almira reported that one of the reasons for her positive attitude towards English and Russian as a subject was that both teachers mixed languages when explaining the material to the students and allowed the participants to use other languages (Russian, English) during their lessons. Hence, it is important to define the term "translanguaging" and discuss its relation to studying in the Kazakh language. According to García et al. (2017), in 1980s Cen Williams first introduced the term translanguaging to describe a teaching practice that encouraged students to alternate languages in Welsh/English bilingual classes. Thus, translanguaging was used to refer to flexible bilingual practices and teaching approaches which contributed to the positive development of these practices. It went beyond the boundaries of languages and instead of viewing them as separate systems, highlighted their dynamic nature (Goodman & Tastanbek, 2021). In general, translanguaging allows learners to use their whole linguistic repertoires to reinforce their learning, or to "make meaning" (Creese, 2009, p. 268), and to comprehend their bilingual nature (García, 2009). Thus, in contrast with the teacher's view of the necessity of

communicating in Kazakh only during classes, allowing the participants to use their language repertoires in order to better develop their understanding might have contributed to the improvement of their Kazakh language proficiency. Amaniyazova (2020) who studied the beliefs about translanguaging of eight teachers in one Nazarbayev Intellectual school (NIS) and one mainstream school in Nur-Sultan, revealed that the majority of teachers believed that the most appropriate way to teach target language was to avoid the use of students' L1. In other words, the prevailing part of the interviewed teachers preferred a monolingual approach in language learning. In addition, from the obtained data it was found that there was a lack of awareness about translanguaging practices among those teachers. However, the interviewed teachers recognized translanguaging as a scaffolding strategy which provides students with initial support and helps them to achieve their academic goals (Amaniyazova, 2020). Moreover, the participants of Amaniyzova's (2020) study stated that it is crucial to enable students' whole linguistic repertoires to ensure their comprehension of phrases and words in the target language. Thus, despite supporting one language, or monolingual teaching approach, some of the participant teachers acknowledged translanguaging and its possible benefits in the learning process.

As for the positive involvement of teachers in the participants' Kazakh language learning experiences, several participants (Almira, Askar, Alikhan, Nurlan, Samira) tended to directly ask teachers if something was not clear during classes. Thus, the participants' use of social strategies was mediated by the teachers. However, one of the participants (Almira) claimed that sometimes she did not ask questions as she was afraid of the teacher's negative reaction.

Overall, the social realia in which students develop their identities is prescribed by power. Therefore, powerful figures such as teachers or native speakers can set boundaries and linguistic norms in which learners have to operate (Darvin & Norton, 2021). Darvin

and Norton (2021) state that in some cases those boundaries deprive students of opportunities to communicate, and be heard. Consequently, in order to become legitimate speakers of a particular language in one community, learners need to constantly mediate their identities. Echoing this point, despite the challenges of studying in the Kazakh language the participants started to recognize their duty as members of Kazakh speaking society, which can also be described as the concept "ought-to self" which contributes to learners' adjustment to perceived norms, and expectations (Dörnyei, 2009). That is, the ought-to language self represents the external pressures that the individual attempts to respond in order to avoid possible negative consequences from learning failure or to head towards meeting the goals foisted on them by authority figures, such as parents and teachers (Dörnyei, 2009). Therefore, many participants invested in the Kazakh language because they believed that it would help them to achieve a greater range of symbolic resources which in turn would enhance the quality of their cultural capital and social power (Darvin & Norton, 2018). Thus, all participants enjoyed studying in the Kazakh language and would not wish to switch to Russian as a medium of instruction.

RQ3: How Did they Deal with these Challenges (i.e., Their Strategy Uses)?

This section presents information on the types of strategies that were used by the participants during their experiences studying in the Kazakh language and learning it. LLSs are “actions that are consciously deployed by language learners to help them to learn or use a language more effectively” (Rose, 2015, p. 421-422). The table which divides these strategies according to each participant was presented in Chapter 4, page 63. The current study adopted Oxford’s (1990) classification which includes direct and indirect types of strategies of language learning. More specifically, Oxford (1990) divides them into "memory strategies", "cognitive strategies", and "compensation strategies" (direct), and "metacognitive strategies", "affective strategies", and "social strategies" (indirect) (for

more elaboration about strategy classification, see Chapter 2). The main findings associated with the use of such strategies by the participants will be discussed further.

Direct Strategies

Direct strategies are based on the involvement of cognitive processing while learning a language. Importantly, it was discovered that seven participants (Almira, Damir, Askar, Alikhan, Karina, Nurlan, Talgat) tended to deploy all three types of direct strategies. These strategies were “learning new words in context” (i.e., memory strategy), “translation the new Kazakh vocabulary into Russian”, “repetition”, “writing down new Kazakh words” and “practicing the language in informal contexts” (i.e., cognitive strategies) and “avoiding communication to save one’s safe” (i.e., compensation strategies).

According to Oxford (1990, 2017), memory strategies can contribute to the creation of linkages in the learners’ brains while they are obtaining new linguistic information. Thus, one participant (Damir) exercised his learner’s agency by deploying a memory strategy by learning and using the new words in a context. He used new words when speaking to different social agents in order to remember them. Thus, the use of cognitive strategies helped the participants to master the language (Oxford, 1990). For example, to comprehend the meaning of unfamiliar Kazakh words and expressions, Almira and Alikhan used oral repetition to memorize these words; they tended to write them down, or translate them from Kazakh to Russian by using online dictionaries. Hence, one of the strategies was mediated by an object, namely the Internet, to which students referred to in order to translate Kazakh vocabulary. This finding concurs with Norton and Toohey’s (2011) suggestion that language learning is a social process, in which culturally and historically situated individuals engage in “culturally valued activities, using cultural tools” such as books, media and technology (p. 419).

Other participants (Askar, Alikhan, Karina, Nurlan, and Talgat) invested in their Kazakh language learning efforts by seeking opportunities to practice the language naturalistically. These participants obtained support from social agents as they were practicing speaking the Kazakh language outside the classroom with their peers, and also referred to the mediating role of objects such as books, that helped them to practice naturalistic reading. The involvement of peers can also be classified as a social strategy; therefore, practicing the language with peers can be seen as an example of the converging use of cognitive and social practices. As White (2012) states, language learning “is no longer hermetically sealed within the classroom, with the teacher and the textbook as the sole or principal source of target language texts and learning opportunities” (p. 8).

As for compensation strategies that helped the learners to deal with language limitations (Oxford, 1990), Damir, Nurlan, and Samira reported that they sometimes chose not to speak in the classroom and avoided communication. Thus, in order to deal with individual challenges, namely, the anxiety of committing mistakes, Damir and Nurlan deployed one of the compensation strategies, particularly that of "avoiding communication" (Oxford, 1990, p. 48). Moreover, it helped them to overcome the limitations connected with their insufficient knowledge of Kazakh vocabulary and speaking skills.

Indirect Strategies

Indirect strategies which can mainly be described by Oxford (1990) as strategies supporting language learning without being directly involved in it were also utilized by almost all participants (Almira, Askar, Alikhan, Damir, Karina, Nurlan, and Samira). These strategies were “self-evaluation” (i.e., a metacognitive strategy), “self-encouragement” (i.e., an affective strategy), “asking questions” and “co-operating with others” (i.e., social strategies).

Oxford (1990, 2017) postulates that metacognitive strategies provide language learners with the opportunity to control and organize their learning process. The metacognitive strategy of self-evaluation was used by the majority of the participants (Almira, Askar, Alikhan, Damir, Karina, and Samira). These participants reported about their progress in studying in the Kazakh language by stating that their Kazakh language proficiency improved over time. It was found that only one participant (Karina) applied affective strategies which are connected to the learners' feelings and attitudes within the process of learning languages (Oxford, 1990). Thus, she made efforts to eliminate her anxiety by using the strategy of self-encouragement. Karina shared her experience practicing the Kazakh language with her friends which helped her to learn more about her mistakes, which in turn, motivated her to study the Kazakh language more deliberately. This can be considered as an example of combining affective and social strategies, which are discussed further.

Five participants (Almira, Alikhan, Askar, Nurlan, and Samira) were constantly seeking support and cooperation from their family members, teachers, and peers. Thus, they used social strategies which were mediated by different social agents. These participants used social strategies when they struggled to understand the meaning of Kazakh words and expressions, or comprehend written material. Emphasizing the importance of metacognitive and social strategies in language learning can be clearly replicated in Norton and Toohey's (2001) study with an immigrant Polish woman in Canada. In order to gain access to her working place at a fast-food restaurant and build a meaningful relationship with her co-workers, that woman exercised her agentive power by using some effective LLSs such as teaching her co-workers some Italian words in return of communicating English with her, sharing her knowledge of European countries with them and not feeling ashamed of committing mistakes while using English.

Overall, despite the tendency of using all types of strategies by the participants as stated by Oxford (1990) in her classification, there was a lack of diversity in the implementation of those strategies. This section revealed that there was a maximum usage of four different strategies within one sub-group (cognitive strategies), whereas, for other sub-groups, the participants deployed only a limited number of strategies (one, or two).

Conclusion

This chapter delineated the findings presented in Chapter 4 in the light of existing theoretical and empirical studies related to the current research topic as well as Darwin and Norton's (2015) model of investment which was employed as the conceptual framework of this study. Thus, this chapter provided information about the main findings on Russian-dominant Kazakh students' challenges of studying in the Kazakh language, the contextual factors that influenced their Kazakh language learning experiences, and the language learning strategies that the participants used to overcome those challenges in correspondence with the notions of identity, learner agency, and power relations.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The previous chapter focused on the discussion of the main findings of this research which aimed at capturing the linguistic and academic challenges that eight Russian-dominant Kazakh students encountered while studying through the medium of Kazakh and the strategies they deployed to overcome these challenges. This study also attempted to unearth the different contextual factors (e.g., teachers' practices, parents' level of involvement and material artefacts) in scaffolding the participants' language learning experiences, underlying strategy uses and development. Two qualitative research methods were used to collect the data from the participants: narrative writing and semi-structured online interviews. This chapter presents the main conclusions of the current study as well as explains its main strengths and limitations. Moreover, it proposes further implications and recommendations.

Major Conclusions of the Study

The present study explored the challenges of a group of Russian-dominant Kazakh students who were studying in a Kazakh-medium school in Nur-Sultan, and the language learning strategies (LLSs) they espoused during their Kazakh language learning experiences. The study was underpinned by a sociocultural perspective, which allowed the researcher to disentangle the participants' situated language learning experiences and their own actual and dynamic uses of LLSs in response to the mediation of a myriad of contextual realities, including social actors and assessment modes. More specifically, this research was guided by David and Norton's (2015) model of investment which highlights the roles of ideology, capital, and power in relation to language learning. Thus, the participants' challenges of studying in Kazakh as a medium of instruction (KMI), their LLS choices, as well as the contextual factors that influenced the participants' language

learning experiences were presented in Chapter 4 and further discussed in relation to the existing literature and conceptual framework in Chapter 5.

As regards the challenges that the participants faced during their education in the Kazakh-medium school, they were divided into three categories, namely, “linguistic challenges”, “content comprehension challenges”, and “individual challenges”. Thus, being raised in families where the Russian language was used predominantly in comparison with the Kazakh language, the participants were not fully able to develop their Kazakh language knowledge and skills in the pre-school period. Despite six participants (Almira, Alikhan, Damir, Karina, Samira, Talgat) attending Kazakh kindergartens, it did not significantly contribute to the improvement of their Kazakh language proficiency. This finding is largely attributed to the language choice of the participants’ families, in the sense that they were almost only exposed to the Russian language outside the classroom, especially in their households since childhood. Consequently, during their studying in KMI, the participants confronted a host of difficulties in understanding Kazakh academic and literary words, phrases, and expressions. Related to this, the participants’ insufficient knowledge of the Kazakh vocabulary caused challenges in reading material in the Kazakh language, listening to teachers’ explanations and instructions, writing essays and completing other written assignments, and participating in classroom discussions, as well as responding to teachers’ questions orally. As a result, the participants’ insufficient linguistic skills in the Kazakh language affected the quality of their content comprehension. For example, two participants (Damir, Samira) did not have an interest in geography, physics, or chemistry because they struggled to understand the content in the Kazakh language. Others (Almira, Alikhan, Karina) had to deploy the less effective strategies such as the rote memorization and repetition strategies (i.e., exam-oriented strategies) instead of trying to understand the essence of the learning material. What is

more important, some participants (Damir, Samira) compared education in Kazakh and Russian by stating that it would be less complicated to study in Russian because their Russian language skills might outperform their Kazakh language skills. Furthermore, insufficient knowledge of the Kazakh language that resulted in different linguistic and content comprehension challenges also played a focal role in affecting the participants' self-confidence and enthusiasm for learning. Thus, some participants shared their experiences of having anxiety while answering the teacher's questions in front of the class. For example, two participants (Karina, Talgat) found it difficult to pronounce some new Kazakh words properly, whereas two other participants (Damir, Nurlan) experienced problems with finishing their speech, as they tended to forget appropriate Kazakh words or phrases.

In order to overcome the challenges described above, many participants exercised their own agentive power by adopting some LLSs to improve their Kazakh language proficiency. These strategies were analyzed according to Oxford's (1990) classification of LLSs into "direct strategies" (memory, cognitive, compensation), and "indirect strategies" (metacognitive, affective, social). Most participants tended to use memory and cognitive strategies such as writing down new Kazakh words and their translation, taking notes, memorization, repetition, practicing naturalistically to enhance their Kazakh language vocabulary and improve their linguistic skills overall. Some participants referred to compensation strategies as a way of coping with the anxiety of performing in front of the class. Thus, a number of participants (Damir, Nurlan, Samira) avoided classroom discussions led by a teacher by remaining silent as they did not want to jeopardize their reputation by "losing their faces" in front of other students (Tsui, 1996, p.150).

Also, many participants invested in their Kazakh language learning by deploying "indirect strategies". For example, they organized and monitored their learning processes

by using metacognitive strategies such as self-evaluation as they were able to critically analyze the improvement of their Kazakh language skills over time. Moreover, only one participant adopted affective strategies, namely, self-encouragement, as she acknowledged the importance of working on mistakes for her further improvement. In addition, many participants succeeded in implementing some social strategies such as cooperating with others, asking questions, or practicing speaking Kazakh with others. Thus, the use of social strategies was mediated by social agents including teachers, peers, and immediate family members. Overall, strategies that were used by the participants were presented in Table 1 of Chapter 4.

Strengths and Limitations of the Study

As noted in Chapter 2, almost all empirical studies which explored the challenges of the Kazakhstani students of studying in the Kazakh language (e.g., Amantay et al., 2017; Gumarova 2017) were conducted and interpreted from the teachers', or parents' perspective. In this sense, the Kazakhstani students' voices and perceptions of their language learning experiences across different settings were not captured in the previous studies. As a consequence, this study attempted to bridge this gap by investigating a group of Russian-dominant Kazakh Grade 8 students' challenges of studying in the Kazakh-mediums school, underlying their strategic language learning efforts and learning goals. Notably, this research gave young people the opportunity to express their own perspectives about their own language learning experiences. By doing this, the researcher of the present study conceived young people as competent social agents within their own lifeworld, thus, challenging the concept that they "have limited or no capacity and are incompetent, irrational, and ill-equipped to think for themselves, to articulate or to reason" (Wall et al., 2019, p. 265).

As described in Chapter 2, the lion's share of LLS research has adopted a cognitive approach which views language learning as a set of mental processes and relies greatly on quantitative data, in particular Oxford's (1990) strategy inventory for language learning (SILL). Also, little research has explored Kazakhstani students' language learning experiences and strategy uses from a sociocultural standpoint. With this in mind, this qualitative study takes a sociocultural outlook as a useful lens to unearth the dynamism and context sensitivity of the LLSs according to their specific situations or tasks, stressing the pivotal role of a multitude of contextual factors.

Despite the significance and strengths of the current study, it is important to consider a number of limitations which can be taken into account in further research. First of all, in light of the current situation related to the COVID-19 pandemic, there were considerable differences in the process of participants recruitment and communication with school administration, teachers, and the participants themselves. Thus, because of the increased complexity of this process, it was decided to recruit eight participants from only one mainstream school in Nur-Sultan, although it is a relatively small sample compared to all Russian-dominant Kazakh population. Moreover, during the interviews, the researcher noticed that two participants sometimes struggled to comprehend a couple of interview questions related to the challenges they might face during their education in the Kazakh language. That is, some participants could not differentiate between the challenges connected with their insufficient Kazakh language skills and personal academic challenges which were not associated with the Kazakh language. As a result, the researcher had to ask several additional questions or repeat the question with using simple words to transmit the essence of it to the participants. It would be useful to test the interview questions constructed by the researcher by conducting a pilot interview before the actual data collection began. Also, because of space limitations, the researcher could not present all

findings of the present study and related interview extracts. Hence, these findings are likely to be revisited when the researcher writes an academic paper based on her thesis or participates in an academic conference. For example, one of these findings is associated with the impact of private tutoring on some students' Kazakh language learning and improvement. Nevertheless, this study attempted to reveal the challenges of Russian-dominant Kazakh students in their education in the Kazakh language and give insights on how to deal with these challenges. It is worth noting that in addition to students, it would be beneficial to make a holistic study of the attitudes of other significant individuals (e.g., schoolteachers, parents and policymakers) who can influence the participants' strategy choices and learning goals.

Implications of This Research Study

Based on the analysis of data that was obtained from the participants, further practical steps can be endorsed to contribute to the learning process of Russian-dominant Kazakh students in Kazakh-medium schools.

Translanguaging as a Pedagogical Tool

As noted in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5, the participants shared their preference towards classes in which teachers allowed them to speak not only Kazakh but also the Russian language. In addition, the participants stated that some teachers also used Russian during the lessons. By contrast, they experienced anxiety and fear during Kazakh language classes as the teacher had a negative perception of using other languages than Kazakh during her lessons. Thus, some participants became reluctant to participate in the classroom discussions because of their lack of confidence in speaking Kazakh, and some others deployed cognitive strategies implicitly in order to translate unknown Kazakh words into Russian. With this in mind, it can be suggested that translanguaging can be implemented and prompted as a pedagogical tool during lessons to enhance the learning

process of Russian-dominant Kazakh students in the Kazakh language. García (2009) states that translanguaging refers to "multiple discursive practices in which bilinguals engage in order to make sense of their bilingual worlds" (p. 45). In pedagogy, translanguaging can have different purposes. It can be implemented in various ways, both in language and content classes (Cenoz et al., 2017). The students' L1 can contribute to the acquisition of new knowledge, particularly in content-based instruction in which L1 acts as a cognitive instrument to manage the complexity of the tasks (Levine 2011; Turnbull & Dailey-O'Cain 2009). For example, Cummins (2007) claims that translanguaging strategies may include translation and the use of bilingual dictionaries. The study of Makalela (2015) which focused on 60 students of teacher training in South Africa who had Nguni language as their L1 and were learning Sepedi, suggested that the experimental group who used translanguaging strategies such as brainstorming in any language in groups, reading stories in the first language and retelling them in the target language obtained better results in vocabulary in comparison with the control group in which monolingual strategies were used more. Overall, translanguaging was perceived as a positive experience by the students. Echoing this point, the use of translanguaging during lessons in Kazakh-medium schools can also be justified as there are bilingual students with Russian as a dominant language who have linguistic, content comprehension, and individual challenges connected to their medium of instruction.

Using "Near Peer Role Models" as a Strategy for learning the Kazakh language

In this study, many participants referred to social strategies such as asking questions, cooperating with family members, and peers as tools for learning new Kazakh words, developing their productive skills, and improving their content comprehension abilities in the Kazakh language. With this in mind, teachers can introduce near-peer role models (NPRMs) strategy in the Kazakh-medium classrooms to support students with

insufficient Kazakh language skills. In this strategy, peers can be described as people "who are close to our social, professional and/or age level who for some reason we may respect and admire" (Murphey, 1998, p. 201). This strategy can motivate students to "pursue similar excellence" (Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014, p. 63). Moreover, students' siblings or other significant social agents can also be considered as positive role models for students. For example, in the present study, one of the participants referred to her elder uncle and aunt as authority figures who have high proficiency in the Kazakh language and help her with understanding the essence of stories in it.

Dörnyei and Kubanyiova (2014) state that teachers can increase learners' awareness of the motivational power of this strategy by inviting other successful language learners from the same school, region, or city so that they share their experiences and stories of learning the language with other students. Teachers may also share their stories about their language learning experiences with students. Furthermore, teachers can use classroom online blogs, newsletters, and displays to organize a platform in which students are free to share their experiences and strategies of language learning. Similarly, by being aware of other Russian-dominant Kazakh students' successful learning experiences, and by feeling support from teachers and peers the students' motivation for learning can be increased.

Explicit Language Learning Strategy Instruction

As revealed from the research findings, despite using different types of direct and indirect strategies proposed by Oxford (1990), there was a lack of diversity in the strategy use among the participants. For example, most participants referred to memory and cognitive strategies as their way to cope with the challenges. Only a few of them shared their experiences of using metacognitive and affective strategies. Moreover, some participants showed their lack of awareness of the LLS concept; thus, during the interviews, a question including the word "strategy" was rephrased for the participants in

order to make it more comprehensive. Therefore, “explicit strategy instruction” can be used as a tool for enhancing students' Kazakh language learning experiences and make the participants' strategy use more versatile and multifaceted.

Cohen (2008) defines strategy instruction as “any efforts by teachers, textbooks, or websites” in helping students to develop their knowledge and awareness of their LLSs repertoire, and use this repertoire to accomplish their academic achievements (p. 46). In other words, Cohen (2011) claims that students’ language learning can be improved if students have awareness of the number of LLSs that can be consciously selected and adopted during their language learning or completing a specific task. Thus, the implementation of explicit strategy instruction by teachers can help Russian-dominant Kazakh students to develop their LLSs repertoires and deal with the challenges of studying in KMI.

From the implications of this study described above, several recommendations can be suggested by the researcher for different stakeholders. First of all, before choosing a medium of instruction, families who use predominantly Russian in their daily life should analyze the advantages and disadvantages of studying in Kazakh, or Russian in relation to the abilities, and backgrounds of their children. Also, they should pay great attention to the possible challenges that their children might face during education in the Kazakh language in order to rationally evaluate their opportunities of providing support for their children in the future. Furthermore, Russian-dominant Kazakh students who study in Kazakh-medium schools should be encouraged by different significant social agents (i.e., teachers and parents) to share their own language learning experiences and any challenges they might face in Kazakh-medium classrooms. Therefore, the struggles of Russian-dominant Kazakhs in studying in the Kazakh language should not be devalued or silenced; hence, having challenges while studying in KMI should be normalized on a national level.

Finally, this study revealed that teachers' practices can either enhance or diminish Russian-dominant Kazakh students' learning in the Kazakh language. Thus, both content and language teachers in Kazakh-medium schools need to be transparent to innovative pedagogical tools and methods such as translanguaging, NPRMs, and explicit strategy instruction, as they can contribute to the improvement of students' content comprehension in the Kazakh language, and ultimately in their motivation for learning.

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Appendix A

Interview Questions

1. Warming up e.g.:
 - How many members do you have in your family?
 - Where are your parents from?
 - What languages do they speak at home?
 - What languages do you speak at home (with parents, siblings)?
2. When did you start learning Kazakh?
 - How did you learn it?
 - What did you think about learning Kazakh at that time? Is your current attitude towards learning Kazakh different? If yes/no, why?
 - Tell me about your school
 - What are your favorite subjects? Why?
 - Do you have any challenges in studying these subjects? If yes/no, why?
 - How do you overcome them? Are there any strategies do you use?
 - What subjects are the most challenging to study? Why?
 - How do you feel if you do not understand something during the lesson? (add reaction if they clarify or not, take offence or not)
 - Have you received enough help or support? From whom (e.g., teachers, parents, siblings)? How did they help you?
 - What do you do to improve your speaking, listening, writing, reading, etc., normally?
 - Are you satisfied with your Kazakh level?
 - What kind of help do you need most?
3. Closing questions

- What kind of support in terms of learning Kazakh would you like to have?
- Other relevant questions

Appendix B

Interview Coding Example (Excerpt)

Interview 1

<p>Interviewee: <i>вообще, если это на уроке, то я, например, запишу это слово в листок потом прихожу домой и ищу это слово в интернете, и потом я понимаю, что это за слово.</i></p> <p>Interviewer: Ага... а как ты справляешься с трудностями, которые у тебя могут возникнуть во время учебы? Может быть ты используешь какие-нибудь стратегии?</p> <p>Interviewee: <i>ну вот, я смотрю перевод слов в интернете, потом заучиваю. Иногда прошу одноклассников помочь объяснить что-то если не понимаю.</i></p> <p>Interviewer: Окей, а как ты себя чувствуешь, когда не понимаешь что-то на уроке?</p> <p>Interviewee: <i>нормально, переспрашиваю у учителя или одноклассников.</i></p> <p>Interviewer: как думаешь, достаточно ли ты получила поддержки во время твоего обучения в школе? Например, от родителей или учителей.</p> <p>Interviewee: <i>Да. Особенно в начальных классах помогали родители уроки делать...да и сейчас помогают.</i></p> <p>Interviewer: то есть, родители понимают задания на казахском?</p>	<p>Writing down unfamiliar Kazakh words (strategies Oxford)</p> <p>Searching for translation on the internet The role of mediating objects (technology)</p> <p>Searching for translation on the internet Memorizing unknown words (strategies Oxford) Support from classmates The role of extended social agents (positive support direct involvement)</p> <p>Asking teachers and classmates for help in understanding something The role of extended social agents direct support</p> <p>Support of immediate family members in doing homework positive indirect involvement</p>
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<p>Interviewee: <i>ну понимают...если не понимают, то мы вместе переводим через переводчик или словарь.</i></p> <p>Interviewer: Мхм, а что насчет учителей? Они оказывают поддержку тебе?</p> <p>Interviewee: <i>Да, я могу у них переспросить если непонятно...но бывает, когда например ты сидишь, и апайка объясняет</i></p>	Translating words together with parents
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Appendix C

Consent Forms

Parental consent form

Title of the study:

Understanding Challenges and Strategy Use of Russian Dominant Kazakhs Studying in Kazakh-Medium Schools: A Qualitative Inquiry

Dear parents/carers,

My name is Sabina Tenbay and I am a master student of the Graduate School of Education at Nazarbayev University. I am researching the challenges and strategies of Grade 8 pupils in studying in the Kazakh language. I am writing to you to request your permission to talk to your child about their learning. The following table summarizes the data I plan to collect from your child:

Time	Data collection tool	Duration
November	Individual interviews	40 minutes
November	An essay about their past language learning experiences in Russian or Kazakh	15 minutes

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that identify your child will remain confidential. In order to make the interviewing easier, a tape recorder will be used. Your child will also be asked if he/she is happy to take part in the study. Participation is entirely voluntary and all participants have the right to withdraw their consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which they are otherwise entitled. The alternative is not to participate. All participants have the right to refuse to answer particular questions. The results of this research will be presented in my masters' thesis. More specifically, the results of this research will be described in "findings", and "discussion" sections of my thesis in compliance of confidentiality and anonymity procedures such as substitution of the participants' names with pseudonyms, and ensuring safety of the data collected from the participants.

I do hope that you will give permission for the participation of you and your child in this research study. Please contact me at (+77019891378) and sabina.tenbay@nu.edu.kz if you have any questions, concerns or complaints about this research, its procedures, risks and benefits. Any other questions or concerns may be addressed to my thesis supervisor, Dr Anas Hajar (anas.hajar@nu.edu.kz), and/or the Nazarbayev University Institutional Research Ethics Committee, resethics@nu.edu.kz.

Please sign this consent form if you agree to participate in this study.

Signed _____ Date _____

I give permission for this interview to be recorded.

Signed _____ Date _____

Yours sincerely,

Sabina Tenbay sabina.tenbay@nu.edu.kz

Signature:

Date:

Ата-аналардың келісім нысаны

Зерттеу атауы:

Қазақ-орта Мектептерде Оқитын Орыс Тілді Қазақтардың Мәселелерін және Стратегия Қолданылуын Түсіну: Сапалы Зерттеу

Құрметті ата-аналар/қамқоршылар,

Менің атым Сабина Тенбай, мен Назарбаев Университеті Жоғары білім беру мектебінің магистрантымын. Мен 8-сынып оқушыларының қазақ тілін үйренудегі проблемалары мен стратегияларын зерттеймін. Мен сізге балаңызбен олардың оқуы туралы сөйлесуге рұқсат сұрау үшін жазып тұрмын. Деректерді жинау құралдары келесі кестеде көрсетілген.

Уақыт	Деректерді жинау құралдары	Ұзақтығы
Қараша	Жеке сұхбат	40 минут
Қараша	Балалардың олардың тілді үйрену тәжірибесі туралы орыс немесе қазақ тілінде эссе жазу	15 минут

Осы зерттеуге байланысты алынған және сіздің балаңызды анықтайтын кез-келген ақпарат құпия болып қалады. Әңгімелесуді жеңілдету үшін магнитофон пайдаланылады. Сондай-ақ, сіздің балаңыздан зерттеуге қатысуға қызығушылығы талқыланады. Қатысу толығымен ерікті болып табылады және барлық қатысушылар өз келісімін қайтарып алуға немесе кез келген уақытта ешқандай жазасыз, және бұл зерттеу нәтижесіндегі шыққан мүмкін пайдаларын жоғалтпай қатысуды тоқтатуға құқылы. Балама-қатысудан бас тарту. Барлық қатысушылар кейбір сұрақтарға жауап беруден бас тартуға құқылы. Бұл зерттеудің нәтижелері менің магистрлік диссертациямның «алынған мәліметтер» және «талқылау» бөлімдерінде қатысушылардың аттарын бүркеншік аттармен алмастыру, сондай-ақ қатысушылардан жиналған деректердің сақталуын қамтамасыз ету сияқты құпиялық пен анонимдік рәсімдеріне сәйкес жазылады. Сізге және сіздің балаңызға осы зерттеуге қатысуға рұқсат бересіз деп үміттенемін. Маған телефон арқылы хабарласыңыз (+77019891378) немесе sabina.tenbay@nu.edu.kz, егер сізде осы зерттеу, оның процедуралары, қауіптері мен артықшылықтары туралы сұрақтар,

алаңдаушылықтар немесе шағымдар болса менің жетекші, доктор Анас Хаджармен (anas.hajar@nu.edu.kz) және / немесе Назарбаев Университетінің Институционалдық зерттеулер этикасы жөніндегі комитетімен, resethics@nu.edu.kz байланыса аласыз.

Егер сіз осы зерттеуге қатысуға келіссеңіз, осы Келісімге қол қойыңыз.

Қолы _____ Күні _____

Мен осы сұхбатты диктофон құралдарына жазып алуға рұқсат беремін.

Қолы _____ Күні _____

Ізгі ниетпен,

Сабина Тенбай sabina.tenbay@nu.edu.kz

Қолы:

Күні:

Форма согласия родителей**Название исследования:**

Понимание проблем и использование стратегий русскоговорящими казахами, которые обучаются в казахских средних школах: качественное исследование

Уважаемые родители / опекуны,

Меня зовут Сабина Тенбай, я учусь в магистратуре Высшей школы образования Назарбаев Университета. Я исследую проблемы и стратегии учеников 8-х классов в обучении на казахском языке. Я пишу вам, чтобы попросить вашего разрешения поговорить с вашим ребенком об их обучении. В следующей таблице приведены данные, которые я планирую получить от вашего ребенка:

Время	Инструменты для сбора данных	Длительность
Ноябрь	Индивидуальные интервью	40 минут
Ноябрь	Эссе об опыте изучения языков на казахском или русском	15 минут

Любая информация, полученная в связи с этим исследованием и идентифицирующая вашего ребенка, останется конфиденциальной. Для облегчения собеседования будет использован диктофон. Вашего ребенка также спросят, рад ли он / она принять участие в исследовании. Участие является полностью добровольным, и все участники имеют право отозвать свое согласие или прекратить участие в любое время без штрафа или потери преимуществ, на которые они имеют право. Альтернатива - не участвовать. Все участники имеют право отказаться отвечать на отдельные вопросы. Результаты этого исследования будут представлены в моей магистерской диссертации. Более конкретно, результаты этого исследования будут описаны в разделах «выводы» и «обсуждение» с соблюдением всех правил анонимности и конфиденциальности такими как замена настоящих имен на псевдонимы, и обеспечение безопасности полученной информации.

Я очень надеюсь, что вы дадите разрешение на участие вас и вашего ребенка в этом исследовании. Пожалуйста, свяжитесь со мной по телефону (+77019891378) и sabina.tenbay@nu.edu.kz, если у вас есть какие-либо вопросы, опасения или жалобы по поводу этого исследования, его процедур, рисков и преимуществ. С любыми другими вопросами или проблемами можно обращаться к моему научному руководителю д-ру Анасу Хаджару (anas.hajar@nu.edu.kz) и / или в Комитет по институциональной этике исследований Назарбаев Университета, resethics@nu.edu.kz.

Пожалуйста, подпишите это согласие, если вы согласны участвовать в этом исследовании.

Подпись _____ Дата _____

Я даю разрешение на запись интервью.

Подпись _____ Дата _____

Искренне Ваша,

Сабина Тенбай sabina.tenbay@nu.edu.kz

Подпись:

Дата:

Consent form for students**Title of the study:****Understanding Challenges and Strategy Use of Russian Dominant Kazakhs Studying in Kazakh-Medium Schools: A Qualitative Inquiry**

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by *Sabina Tenbay* in the Graduate School of Education at the Nazarbayev University (NU). You were selected as a possible participant in this study because it focuses on the challenges and strategies of Grade 8 pupils in studying in the Kazakh language. Your participation in this research study is voluntary.

Please talk this over with your parents before you decide whether or not to participate. We will also ask your parents to give their permission for you to take part in this study. But even if your parents say “yes” you can still decide not to do this.

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked first to write an essay about your background, family, and your past language learning experience. After that, an individual interview will be conducted to gain deeper information about your experience of learning through the medium of Kazakh. Approximate time and duration of the individual interviews and narrative writing are presented in the following table:

Time	Data collection tool	Duration
November	Individual interviews	40 minutes
November	An essay in Kazak or Russian	15 minutes

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that identify you will remain confidential. In order to make the interviewing easier, a tape recorder will be used. You have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. The alternative is not to participate. You have the right to refuse to answer particular questions. The data collected from you will be used only for research purposes, not for assessment purposes, and there are no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’, or ‘good’ or ‘bad’ answers. The results of this research will be presented in my masters’ thesis. More specifically, the results of this research will be described in “findings”, and “discussion” sections of my thesis in compliance of confidentiality and anonymity procedures such as substitution of the participants’ names with pseudonyms, and ensuring safety of the data collected from the participants.

If you have any questions, comments or concerns about the research, you can talk to the one of the researchers. Please contact *me* at +77019891378 and sabina.tenbay@nu.edu.kz .

If you wish to ask questions about your rights as a research participant or if you wish to voice any problems or concerns you may have about the study to someone other than the researchers, please write an email to my thesis supervisor, Dr Anas Hajar (anas.hajar@nu.edu.kz), and/or IREC at resethics@nu.edu.kz.

SIGNATURE OF STUDY PARTICIPANT

I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Participant

Signature of Participant

Date

SIGNATURE OF PERSON OBTAINING ASSENT

In my judgment the participant is voluntarily and knowingly agreeing to participate in this research study.

Name of Person Obtaining Assent

Contact Number

Signature of Person Obtaining Assent

Date

Студенттер үшін келісім формасы

Зерттеу атауы:

Қазақ-орта Мектептерде Оқитын Орыс Тілді Қазақтардың Мәселелерін және Стратегия Қолданылуын Түсіну: Сапалы Зерттеу

Сізден осы зерттеуді жүргізетін Сабина Тенбай Назарбаев Университетінің жоғары білім беру мектебінің магистранты зерттеуге қатысуды сұрайды. Сіз осы зерттеудің ықтимал қатысушысы ретінде таңдалдыңыз, себебі ол 8-сынып оқушыларының қазақ тілін үйренудегі проблемалары мен стратегияларына назар аударады. Сіздің осы зерттеуге қатысуыңыз ерікті болып табылады.

Қатысу немесе қатыспау туралы шешім қабылдас бұрын, мұны ата-анаңызбен талқылаңыз. Сондай-ақ, біз сіздің ата-анаңыздан осы зерттеуге қатысуға рұқсат сұраймыз. Бірақ сіздің ата-анаңыз "иә" десе де, сіз бұл зерттеуде қатысудан бас тарта аласыз.

Егер сіз осы зерттеуге өз еркіңізбен қатыссаңыз, сізден сізден отбасыңыз және тілді қолдану туралы әңгіме жазу сұралады. Оқушылардың қазақ тілінде оқудағы қиындықтары және стратегиялары туралы терең ақпарат алу үшін жеке сұхбат жүргізіледі. Жеке әңгімелесудің және эссе жазудың болжамды уақыты мен ұзақтығы келесі кестеде көрсетілген:

Уақыт	Деректерді жинау құралдары	Ұзақтығы
Қараша	Жеке сұхбат	40 минут
Қараша	Балалардың олардың тілді үйрену тәжірибесі туралы орыс немесе қазақ тілінде эссе жазу	15 минут

Осы зерттеуге байланысты алынған және сізді анықтайтын кез-келген ақпарат құпия болып қалады. Әңгімелесуді жеңілдету үшін диктофон пайдаланылады. Сіздің өз келісіміңізді қайтарып алуға немесе ешқандай жазасыз, және бұл зерттеу нәтижесіндегі шыққан мүмкін пайдаларын жоғалтпай қатысуды тоқтатуға құқығыңыз бар. Балама-қатысудан бас тарту. Сіздің кейбір сұрақтарға жауап беруден бас тартуға құқығыңыз бар. Сізден алынған деректер бағалау үшін емес, зерттеу мақсатында ғана пайдаланылады және "дұрыс" немесе "дұрыс емес" немесе "жақсы" немесе "жаман" жауаптар жоқ. Бұл

зерттеудің нәтижелері менің магистрлік диссертациямның «алынған мәліметтер» және «талқылау» бөлімдерінде қатысушылардың аттарын бүркеншік аттармен алмастыру, сондай-ақ қатысушылардан жиналған деректердің сақталуын қамтамасыз ету сияқты құпиялылық пен анонимдік рәсімдеріне сәйкес жазылады.

Егер сізде зерттеу туралы сұрақтарыңыз, пікірлеріңіз немесе алаңдаушылықтарыңыз болса, сіз зерттеушілердің бірімен сөйлесе аласыз. Маған +77019891378 телефоны немесе пошта sabina.tenbay@nu.edu.kz арқылы хабарласыңыз.

Егер сіз зерттеуге қатысушы ретінде өз құқықтарыңыз туралы сұрақтар қойғыңыз келсе немесе зерттеуге байланысты туындауы мүмкін мәселелер мен алаңдаушылықтарды айтқыңыз келсе, зерттеушілерден басқа біреуге менің жетекшіме, доктор Анас Хаджарға электрондық хат жіберіңіз (anas.hajar@nu.edu.kz), және/немесе IREC resethics@nu.edu.kz.

ЗЕРТТЕУГЕ ҚАТЫСУШЫНЫҢ ҚОЛЫ

Мен жоғарыда сипатталған процедураларды түсінемін. Менің сұрақтарыма қанағаттанарлық жауаптар берілді, Мен осы зерттеуге қатысуға келісемін. Маған осы бланктің көшірмесі берілді.

Қатысушының есімі

Қатысушының қолы

Күні:

КЕЛІСІМ АЛҒАН ТҮЛҒАНЫҢ ҚОЛЫ

Менің ойымша, қатысушы өз еркімен және саналы түрде осы зерттеуге қатысуға келіседі.

Келісім алған тұлғаның аты

Байланыс телефоны

Келісім алған тұлғаның қолы

Қолы

Форма согласия для студентов**Название исследования:**

Понимание проблем и использование стратегий русскоговорящими казахами, которые обучаются в казахских средних школах: качественное исследование

Вас просят принять участие в исследовании, проведенном Сабиной Тенбай в Высшей школе образования, Назарбаев Университета (НУ). Вы были выбраны в качестве возможного участника этого исследования, поскольку оно фокусируется на задачах и стратегиях учеников 8-х классов в обучении на казахском языке. Ваше участие в этом исследовании добровольно.

Пожалуйста, обсудите это со своими родителями, прежде чем вы решите, участвовать или нет. Мы также попросим ваших родителей дать вам разрешение на участие в этом исследовании. Но даже если ваши родители скажут «да», вы все равно можете отказаться от этого.

Если вы добровольно согласитесь участвовать в этом исследовании, вас попросят написать рассказ о вашем прошлом, семье и использовании языка. Также, для получения более точной информации вам будут задаваться вопросы о трудностях, которые могут встречаться в вашем обучении на казахском языке, а также возможных стратегиях во время личных интервью. Примерное время и продолжительность индивидуальных интервью и написаний эссе представлены в следующей таблице:

Время	Инструменты для сбора данных	Длительность
Ноябрь	Индивидуальные интервью	40 минут
Ноябрь	Эссе об опыте изучения языков на казахском или русском	15 минут

Любая информация, полученная, в связи с этим исследованием и позволяющая установить вашу личность, останется конфиденциальной. Для облегчения собеседования будет использован диктофон. Вы имеете право отозвать свое согласие или прекратить участие в любое время без штрафа или потери преимуществ, на которые вы имеете право. Альтернатива - не участвовать. Вы имеете право отказаться отвечать на конкретные

вопросы. Данные, собранные от вас, будут использоваться только в исследовательских целях, а не для целей оценки, и здесь нет «правильных» или «неправильных», «хороших» или «плохих» ответов. Результаты этого исследования будут представлены в моей магистерской диссертации. Более конкретно, результаты этого исследования будут описаны в разделах «выводы» и «обсуждение» с соблюдением всех правил анонимности и конфиденциальности такими как замена настоящих имен на псевдонимы, и обеспечение безопасности полученной информации.

Если у вас есть какие-либо вопросы, комментарии или опасения по поводу исследования, вы можете поговорить с одним из исследователей. Свяжитесь со мной по телефонам +77019891378 и sabina.tenbay@nu.edu.kz.

Если вы хотите задать вопросы о своих правах как участника исследования или высказать любые проблемы или опасения, которые могут возникнуть в связи с исследованием, кому-либо, кроме исследователей, напишите электронное письмо моему руководителю диссертации д-ру Анасу Хаджару (anas.hajar@nu.edu.kz) и / или IREC по адресу resethics@nu.edu.kz.

ПОДПИСЬ УЧАСТНИКА ИССЛЕДОВАНИЯ

Я понимаю описанные выше процедуры. На мои вопросы были даны удовлетворительные ответы, и я согласен участвовать в этом исследовании. Мне дали копию этой формы.

Имя участника

Подпись участника

Дата

ПОДПИСЬ ЛИЦА, ПОЛУЧАЮЩЕГО ПОМОЩЬ

По моему мнению, участник добровольно и сознательно соглашается участвовать в этом исследовании.

Имя лица, получающего согласие

Контактный номер

Подпись лица, получающего согласие

Дата

Appendix D

Transcription Sample of Interview 6 (English)

Interviewer: Hello again! How old are you?

Interviewee: Hello! I am 13 years old.

Interviewer: So, did you start going to school at the age of 6?

Interviewee: Yes, my parents sent me to school earlier.

Interviewer: Ok, where are you from?

Interviewee: I was born in Ust-Kamenogorsk.

Interviewer: So, are your parents from there too?

Interviewee: my mom is from Semey, and my dad is from Ust-Kamenogorsk.

Interviewer: How many of you are in your family?

Interviewee: There are 4 of us. Mom, dad, me, and my sister. She is one year younger than me.

Interviewer: Okay ... let's move on to the next question. You wrote that you usually speak Russian at home, and sometimes Kazakh, right?

Interviewee: Yes, but we speak Russian more.

Interviewer: With both of your parents and your sister?

Interviewee: Yes, we have been used to speak only Russian since childhood but with my grandfather and grandmother, we sometimes speak Kazakh or with other elderly relatives.

Interviewer: What language do you speak with your friends?

Interviewee: We also speak Russian with friends.

Interviewer: Okay, the next question. When did you start learning the Kazakh language?

Interviewee: Well, in general, as a child, I sometimes used to talk to my grandparents in Kazakh.

Interviewer: Did you like learning Kazakh then?

Interviewee: I liked it as a child, but I don't remember of course, it was not that difficult, because we mixed both Russian and Kazakh.

Interviewer: Interesting ... and how has your attitude towards learning the Kazakh language changed? Now you are studying in Kazakh at school ...

Interviewee: It almost didn't change ... now everyone around me is speaking Kazakh, and I also have to speak Kazakh, but for me it is inconvenient. It is difficult to pronounce some words, I stumble, sometimes I cannot answer the questions well.

Interviewer: Is it in everyday life, or at school?

Interviewee: In general, we have to speak only Kazakh with our teachers at school, since we are studying in Kazakh. In our Kazakh language lessons, the teacher scolds us if she hears anyone uses Russian with his classmates. But the English teacher herself sometimes explains the topics to us in Russian.

Interviewer: Okay. So, do you try to speak Kazakh only during lessons so that the teacher doesn't get angry?

Interviewee: Yes, and she also can lower the grades... and my classmates also speak Kazakh to each other.

Interviewer: Do you also communicate with them in Kazakh?

Interviewee: I communicate with guys who speak Russian more.

Interviewer: Why?

Interviewee: We have something to discuss, we understand each other. Of course, I communicate with everyone in the classroom, but with my friends more, because it is more convenient for us to speak Russian

Interviewer: Okay ... what about your favorite subjects? Are there any subjects that you like?

Interviewee: I like algebra, English, and Russian.

Interviewer: Do you have any problems in studying these subjects?

Interviewee: Not really. I like algebra because I like to solve different problems. And the Russian, and English language lessons because I find them easy to study.

Interviewer: Why do you find them easy?

Interviewee: Well, I already speak Russian well. Thus, reading books, learning poetry in Russian is not difficult for me. As for English, I also understand it well, and the lessons are very interesting.

Interviewer: I see, are there any subjects that are not easy to study for?

Interviewee: These are Kazakh literature, the Kazakh language and then geometry, chemistry, physics.

Interviewer: Why?

Interviewee: Because you need to learn a lot while studying them. For example, you need to memorize a lot of things while studying chemistry, or physics because they are not easy to understand. When I read Kazakh literature, I do not understand everything. This is because we are asked to read a lot of different stories but they are hard written, and I do not understand some literary words. Then, when we need to answer questions and retell literature, I usually remain silent.

Interviewer: And what do you usually do when it is not clear, are there any ways of dealing with these problems when something is not clear?

Interviewee: When I don't understand words in Kazakh, I usually ask my grandparents. They explain these words to me in Russian, and sometimes we read Kazakh stories together. They explain the meaning of some difficult words to me, in Russian or Kazakh. They speak Kazakh better than my parents.

Interviewer: And if, for example, you don't understand something during the lesson?

Interviewee: Usually I ask my classmates, or look up the translation of words on the Internet, then it becomes clear.

Interviewer: Well, how do you feel if you don't understand something during the lesson?

Interviewee: Well, I ask my classmates and they explain everything to me.

Interviewer: I see ... when you first started attending school, did you get any help with your studying?

Interviewee: Yes, my parents helped me.

Interviewer: How?

Interviewee: They helped me to do my homework, always sat until the night with me.

Interviewer: Did they themselves understand these tasks in Kazakh?

Interviewee: Well, it seems, yes, but now they don't understand anything at all in Kazakh.

Interviewer: Probably because the amount of information has increased now.

Interviewee: Yes, and the lessons have become more difficult. But I do my homework without any help, it's not very difficult.

Interviewer: Have you ever done something to improve your proficiency of the Kazakh language?

Interviewee: I went to a private tutor.

Interviewer: A Kazakh language tutor?

Interviewee: Yes...

Interviewer: Was there any progress, or improvements?

Interviewee: Yes ... there was.

Interviewer: What did you mainly do with your tutor?

Interviewee: Well, she asked me to read something in Kazakh and to learn Kazakh words. Also, for example, when we read some Kazakh literature at school, then, I tended to discuss it with the tutor, and we used to analyze texts together. She also explained different

grammar rules to me in Kazakh, we completed different exercises. Therefore, my grammar improved. Now it's easier for me to write in Kazakh.

Interviewer: Good. Are you going to the tutor now?

Interviewee: Not anymore, because of the coronavirus I don't go anywhere.

Interviewer: So, all this time before grade 8, did you study with a Kazakh tutor?

Interviewee: Yes, but I also went to other private tutors who taught algebra, physics, and English.

Interviewer: Okay. What else do you do to improve your Kazakh?

Interviewee: I don't know.

Interviewer: Do you read books in Kazakh? Not from the school program but books that you personally choose.

Interviewee: No, I don't read books in Kazakh, I read them Russian.

Interviewer: Okay then ... are you satisfied with your level of Kazakh now?

Interviewee: Well, now yes. Although sometimes I don't understand the words, now I speak Kazakh better.

Interviewer: I see ... what do you think, what kind of help do you need the most with learning the Kazakh language? Or what kind of help may be needed in the future?

Interviewee: I didn't even think about it. I just went to the tutor and improved my skills.

Interviewer: What kind of help can be provided from your school teachers?

Interviewee: To be more understanding ... Sometimes they think that I do not answer because I am not prepared for the lessons, but I prepare for lessons. I'm just afraid that I won't be able to give full answers, or there won't be enough words. Maybe it would be useful if they will explain the meaning of some Kazakh words, or even translate them into Russian.

Interviewer: Do you think that if they sometimes translate words into Russian during the lessons, will it also contribute to the knowledge of other students?

Interviewee: I think yes, because many of us speak Russian.

Interviewer: Okay, do you like learning Kazakh in general?

Interviewee: In general, yes, I have already begun to understand Kazakh a lot.

Interviewer: Well done! That was the last question, is there anything else you would like to add?

Interviewee: I think no.

Interviewer: Great, thank you very much for taking part in my research! As I said, this is all anonymous, your names will not be seen, I will replace them with pseudonyms.

Interviewee: Yes, I got it. Thank you too. Bye!

Interviewer: Goodbye!

Образец Транскрипции Интервью 6 (Оригинал)

Interviewer: Привет еще раз! Скажи сколько тебе лет

Interviewee: Здравствуйте! Мне 13 лет.

Interviewer: Получается, ты в 6 лет пошел в школу?

Interviewee: Да, родители меня отдали раньше.

Interviewer: Хорошо, а откуда ты родом?

Interviewee: Я родился в Усть-Каменогорске.

Interviewer: Так, твои родители тоже оттуда?

Interviewee: Мама из Семей, а папа из Усть-Каменогорска.

Interviewer: А сколько вас в семье?

Interviewee: Нас 4 человека. Мама, папа, я, и сестренка, она меня младше на один год.

Interviewer: Окей...перейдем к следующему вопросу. Ты писал, что вы разговариваете дома на русском, и иногда на казахском, верно?

Interviewee: Да, но мы больше говорим на русском.

Interviewer: И с родителями, и с сестренкой?

Interviewee: Да, потому что мы привыкли с детства разговаривать только на русском. Но с бабушкой и дедушкой мы иногда говорим на казахском. Или с другими взрослыми родственниками.

Interviewer: А с друзьями на каком языке говоришь?

Interviewee: С друзьями тоже разговариваем на русском.

Interviewer: Хорошо, теперь следующий вопрос. Когда ты начал изучать казахский язык?

Interviewee: Ну вообще, в детстве иногда разговаривал с бабушкой и дедушкой.

Interviewer: Тебе нравилось тогда изучать казахский?

Interviewee: В детстве нравилось, но я не помню конечно, особо трудно не было, потому что мы смешивали и русский и казахский.

Interviewer: Интересно...а сейчас как изменилось твое отношение к изучению казахского языка? Ты же теперь в школе учишься на казахском...

Interviewee: Сейчас не сильно...сейчас уже все вокруг говорят на казахском, и приходится тоже говорить на казахском, а для меня это неудобно. Сложно проговаривать некоторые слова, я запинаюсь, иногда не могу хорошо ответить на вопросы.

Interviewer: Это в повседневной жизни, или в школе?

Interviewee: Вообще в школе, там с учителями только на казахском можно говорить, ну мы же на казахском учимся. И по казахскому учительница ругает нас, если услышит, что мы говорим на русском. Но учительница по английскому сама иногда нам объясняет темы на русском.

Interviewer: Понятно. Значит вы стараетесь говорить на казахском, чтобы учительница не злилась?

Interviewee: Да, и чтобы оценки не занижала...еще одноклассники тоже между собой говорят на казахском.

Interviewer: А ты с ними общаешься тоже на казахском?

Interviewee: Я общаюсь больше с ребятами, которые говорят на русском.

Interviewer: Почему?

Interviewee: Потому что, так удобнее. Нам есть, что обсудить, мы друг друга понимаем. Я конечно, со всеми общаюсь в классе, но со своими друзьями больше, потому что нам так удобнее на русском говорить.

Interviewer: Окей...а что насчет твоих любимых предметов? Есть предметы, которые тебе нравятся?

Interviewee: Мне алгебра нравится, потом английский, и русский.

Interviewer: Есть ли у тебя какие-либо проблемы в изучении этих предметов?

Interviewee: Особо нет. Мне нравится алгебра, потому что я люблю решать задачи разные. А русский, и английский потому что легкие предметы.

Interviewer: Почему ты считаешь их легкими?

Interviewee: Ну, на русском я и так хорошо говорю, и читать произведения, учить стихи на русском мне вообще не трудно. А на английском я тоже хорошо понимаю, и уроки проходят интересно.

Interviewer: Понятно, а есть ли предметы, которые тебе даются не так легко?

Interviewee: Это қазақ әдебиеті, қазақ тілі и потом геометрия, химия, физика.

Interviewer: Почему?

Interviewee: Потому что там нужно много учить. Например по химии, физике много вещей нужно зубрить, потому что непонятно. Когда читаю қазақ әдебиеті не все понимаю. Потому что задают много читать разных рассказов, произведений, а они трудно написаны, и я не понимаю литературные слова. Потом, когда нужно отвечать на вопросы, и пересказывать я обычно молчу.

Interviewer: И что ты обычно делаешь когда непонятно, есть ли какие-то способы, как ты решаешь эти проблемы, когда что-то непонятно?

Interviewee: Когда не понимаю слова, обычно спрашиваю у бабушки, или у аташки. Они мне объясняют эти слова на русском, и иногда мы вместе читаем рассказы, они мне объясняют смысл, переводят. Они лучше говорят на казахском, чем родители.

Interviewer: А если например, ты не понимаешь чего-то во время урока?

Interviewee: Обычно я спрашиваю у одноклассников, или смотрю перевод слов в интернете, потом становится понятно.

Interviewer: Хорошо, а как ты себя чувствуешь на уроке если не понимаешь чего-то?

Interviewee: Ну вот, я у одноклассников спрашиваю и они мне объясняют.

Interviewer: Ясно...когда ты начал только ходить в школу, тебе помогали с уроками?

Interviewee: Да родители помогали.

Interviewer: Как?

Interviewee: Они мне помогали делать домашние задания, до ночи сидели.

Interviewer: А они сами понимали эти задания на казахском?

Interviewee: Ну вроде да, но сейчас они вообще ничего не понимают на казахском по моим урокам.

Interviewer: Наверное, потому что сейчас увеличился объем информации.

Interviewee: Да, и уроки труднее стали. Но я уже сам привык делать уроки, особо не трудно.

Interviewer: А ты делаешь что-то чтобы улучшить свой казахский язык?

Interviewee: Я ходил на репетиторство.

Interviewer: По казахскому?

Interviewee: Да, по казахскому...

Interviewer: После этого был прогресс, или улучшения?

Interviewee: Да...был.

Interviewer: А что вы в основном делали с репетитором?

Interviewee: Ну, она задавала мне читать всякое, и учить слова. Или, например, когда мы в школе что-то читали по литературе, я потом с репетитором обсуждал это, и мы с ней полностью разбирали тексты. Еще она мне правила объясняла по казахскому, мы делали разные упражнения. И я грамматику подтянул. Теперь легче писать на казахском.

Interviewer: Хорошо. А сейчас ты ходишь к репетитору?

Interviewee: Уже нет, из-за коронавируса никуда не хожу.

Interviewer: Получается, все это время до этого класса, ты занимался с репетитором по казахскому?

Interviewee: Да, но я еще к другим ходил. По алгебре, физике, английскому.

Interviewer: Окей. А сам ты что-то делаешь, чтобы улучшить казахский свой?

Interviewee: Не знаю даже.

Interviewer: Читаешь ли ты книги на казахском? Не школьные, а сам, например, которые выбираешь.

Interviewee: Нет, на казахском не читаю, я на русском читаю.

Interviewer: Хорошо, тогда...ты сейчас доволен уровнем своего казахского?

Interviewee: Ну, сейчас да. Хоть и не понимаю иногда слова, сейчас лучше разговариваю на казахском.

Interviewer: Понятно...как думаешь, какая помощь тебе больше всего нужна с изучением казахского языка? Или может в дальнейшем какая помощь может потребоваться?

Interviewee: Я даже не думал, просто к репетитору ходил и она помогала.

Interviewer: А от учителей какая помощь может быть оказана?

Interviewee: Чтобы больше понимали...иногда они думают, что я не отвечаю, потому что не учил уроки, но я учу уроки. Просто боюсь, что не смогу до конца ответить, или слов не хватит. И может, на уроках, чтобы они больше объясняли смысл слов, или переводили как-то иногда на русский.

Interviewer: Как думаешь, если будут переводить иногда на русский слова во время урока, другим это будет полезно?

Interviewee: Думаю да, потому что у нас многие на русском говорят.

Interviewer: Хорошо, а вообще тебе нравится учиться на казахском?

Interviewee: Вообще да, я уже намного стал понимать на казахском.

Interviewer: Молодец! Это был последний вопрос, хочешь еще что-нибудь добавить?

Interviewee: Наверное нет.

Interviewer: Отлично, спасибо большое, что принял участие в моем исследовании!

Как я и говорила, это все анонимно, ваших имен не будет видно, я их заменю.

Interviewee: Да, я понял. Вам спасибо. До свидания!

Interviewer: До свидания!